



ÉCOLE GLOBALE

INTERNATIONAL GIRLS' SCHOOL

Dehradun

HOLIDAY HOMEWORK - CLASS XI A English

PAPER 1: COMMENTARY WRITING:

1 The following text is taken from a website advertising a holiday location.

- (a) Comment on the ways in which language and style are used to promote the island and its benefits. [15]
- (b) The designers of the same website are invited to write a similar promotion for another holiday destination and its benefits to potential visitors.

Write a section (between 120–150 words) of this promotion. Base your answer closely on the style and features of the writing in the original extract. [10]

In the azure waters of the Indian Ocean there is an island like no other on earth. An island where nature thrives and man is just a silent observer, curator of one of the most pristine islands on earth. Cousine Island is one of the 115 islands that make up the Seychelles: the perfect destination for travellers seeking an escape from the crowds, but where luxury and service are never compromised. Cousine Island can only be reached by helicopter and it is this seclusion that makes it such an attractive haven for people wanting absolute privacy.

Cousine Island offers you the opportunity to not only visit a private island but to *experience a sense of ownership*. The Island offers privacy found in very few places on earth! 5

From arrival to departure and beyond, you are a part of the Cousine Family – we offer warm hospitality which is unobtrusive and encourages a true 'home away from home' feeling.

Birds and tortoises welcome you, the song of the Magpie Robin enchants you and the ever curious skinks¹ sit quietly awaiting a crumb to fall from your table... 15

Private, unique and intimate weddings are offered on Cousine Island! Where would you find the most romantic beach wedding location to tie the knot? For the ultimate beach wedding, you won't have to look further than Cousine Island. You cannot afford

not to investigate Seychelles beach weddings; the exquisite setting is the perfect ingredient for a happy day, and with our temperate climate, choosing Cousine Island 20 for this milestone will be one of the wisest choices you make.

Most newlyweds long for some seclusion, but they also want comfort and luxury and this is what Cousine Island is all about. For Seychelles beach weddings, the best time to come and tie the knot is from October to February, because you have the promise of lazy, hazy days; calm, serene seas and gentle breezes. 25

Save yourself a great deal of stress. Let us plan everything for you – from your dress, to the flowers, to the music and wedding feast. There are all sorts of different ways you can celebrate your beach wedding, anything from barefoot and tropical to something more formal.

The pressure is on for you to create an experience that is truly unforgettable, and 30 it can be hard to know where to begin, but with Seychelles beach weddings we arrange everything and plan a day that you will never forget, and you will be totally relaxed and rejuvenated from having us arrange every tiny detail.

Come to the 'islands of love' – Seychelles beach weddings and honeymoons are the perfect way to start your journey together and to return again to celebrate all the 35 important stages of your marriage.

The powder-white beach overlooking the turquoise blue water with palm trees swaying gently in the mid-afternoon breeze offers the perfect setting to celebrate your perfect wedding. Whether it is a grand affair with pastor and choir or barefoot on the beach, your wedding is sure to be remembered forever! 40

A perfect day rounded off by a romantic beach barbecue with a bonfire and a starlit sky... or a feast in the pavilion with family and friends.

Your honeymoon – a time to relax after the wedding. Kick off your shoes, settle under a palm tree and read your favourite book or let our spa therapist work away at the stress and tension left over from your wedding. Relax and unwind in our rustic 45 spa which is located at the old Beach House. Our spa features the exclusive Ligne St Barth product range which is a very luxurious and all-natural skincare range.

You will be taken on a sensory journey that will leave you tingling with delight from head to toe. Enjoy our home-made ginger and peppermint tea on the verandah overlooking the ocean. We make sure that your time spent here with us will be 50 enjoyed to the full.

Come and experience true paradise without having to deal with crowds of people!

¹ *skink* : type of lizard

2 The following text is taken from an account of the moments when the ship *Titanic* hit an iceberg in 1912.

(a) Comment on the ways in which language and style are used to create the atmosphere of the scene. [15]

(b) Continue the account (between 120–150 words). You do not have to bring the account to a close. Base your answer closely on the style and features of the original extract. [10]

High in the crow's-nest of the new White Star liner, *Titanic* lookout Frederick Fleet peered into a dazzling night. It was calm, clear and bitterly cold. There was no moon, but the cloudless sky blazed with stars. The Atlantic was like polished plate glass. People later said they had never seen it so smooth.

So far so good. On duty at ten o'clock... a few words about the ice problem with 5
lookout Reginald Lee who shared the same watch... a few more words about the
cold... but mostly just silence as the two men stared into the darkness.

Now the watch was almost over, and still there was nothing unusual. Just the night,
the stars, the biting cold, the wind that rushed through the rigging as the *Titanic*
raced across the calm, black sea at 22.5 knots. It was almost 11.40pm on Sunday, 10
14th April 1912.

Suddenly Fleet saw something directly ahead even darker than the darkness. At first
it was small (about the size, he thought, of two tables put together) but every second
it grew larger and closer. Quickly, Fleet banged the crow's-nest bell three times, the
warning of danger ahead. At the same time he lifted the phone and rang the bridge.¹ 15
'What did you see?' asked a calm voice at the other end.

'Iceberg right ahead,' replied Fleet.

'Thank you,' acknowledged the voice with curiously detached courtesy. Nothing
more said.

For the next thirty-seven seconds Fleet and Lee stood quietly side by side watching 20
the ice draw nearer. Now they were almost on top of it, and still the ship didn't turn.
The berg towered wet and glistening far above the forecastle deck, and both men
braced themselves for a crash. Then miraculously, the bow began to swing to port.
At the last second the stern shot into the clear and the ice glided swiftly by along the
starboard side. It looked to Fleet like a close shave. 25

At this moment Quartermaster George Rowe was standing watch on the after bridge. For him too, it had been an uneventful night – just the sea, the stars, the biting cold. As he paced the deck, he noticed what he and his mates called ‘whiskers round the light’ – tiny splinters of ice in the air, fine as dust, that gave off myriads of bright colours whenever caught in the glow of the deck lights. 30

Then suddenly he felt a curious motion break the steady rhythm of the engines. It was a little like coming alongside a dock wall rather heavily. He glanced forward – and stared again. A windjammer,⁴ sails set, seemed to be passing the starboard side. Then he realized it was an iceberg, towering perhaps a hundred feet above the water. The next instant it was gone, drifting astern into the dark. 35

On this quiet, cold Sunday night a snug bunk seemed about the best place to be.

But a few shipboard diehards were still up. As usual most were in the first-class smoking-room on A deck. Somebody produced a deck of cards, and as they sat playing and laughing, suddenly came that grinding jar. Not much of a shock but enough to give a man a start. In an instant... through the aft³ door... past the Palm Court... and out on to the deck. They were just in time to see the iceberg scraping along the starboard side, a little higher than the boat deck. As it slid by, they watched chunks of ice breaking off and tumbling into the water. In another moment it faded into the darkness astern. 40

The creaking woodwork, the distant rhythm of the engines, the steady rattle of the glass dome over the A deck foyer – all the familiar shipboard sounds vanished as the *Titanic* came to a stop. Far more than any jolt, silence stirred the passengers. On deck there was little fun to be seen; nor was there any sign of danger. For the most part the explorers wandered aimlessly about or stood by the rail, staring into the empty night for some clue to the trouble. The *Titanic* lay dead in the water, three of her four huge funnels blowing off steam with a roar that shattered the quiet, starlit night. Otherwise everything was normal. Towards the stern of the boat an elderly couple strolled arm in arm, oblivious of the roaring steam and the little knots of passengers roving about. 45 50

It was so bitterly cold and there was so little to be seen, that most of the people came inside again. Mingling together, they made a curious picture. Their dress was an odd mixture of bathrobes, evening clothes, fur coats, turtle-neck sweaters. The setting was equally incongruous – the huge glass dome overhead... the dignified oak panelling... the magnificent balustrades with their wrought-iron scrollwork... and looking down on them all, an incredible wall clock adorned with two bronze nymphs, somehow symbolizing Honour and Glory crowning Time. 55 60

¹ *bridge*: a ship's control centre

² *windjammer* : large, old-fashioned sailing ship

³ *aft* : rear

3 The following text is taken from an autobiographical account of growing up.

(a) Comment on the ways in which language and style are used to convey the writer's thoughts and feelings. [15]

(b) Later, the friend records her thoughts and feelings about the writer and the journey in her diary. Write a section of the diary entry (between 120–150 words). Base your answer closely on the material of the original extract. [10]

Since I'm still in my senior year of high school none of my memories are too far in the past... To say the least I've a bad case of senioritis¹ but am fighting well. Anyhow, this seemed to be a pretty profound morning for me about a week ago...

The morning commute is, unfortunately, the same as it's always been. The same 5
grueling forty-five minutes of persistent chatter and the consuming static of a radio that's permanently stuck on "too loud". My only salvation is a single friend, the only soul on this forsaken mass-transit with a shred of dignity and intelligence – and I shouldn't just say a shred, she's practically brimming with it.

As I fold myself into the cracked faux leather seat, my knees press into the bench 10
in front of me and I note, not for the first time, that I'm much too tall for this. In an ineffective effort to escape the monsters around us, we both slide into the confines of the seat and bunker down for the daily ritual. It begins as per usual, we simultaneously contribute to an awkward silence then share common trivialities, like we're meeting for the first time, or passing shopping-carts in the grocery store. 15

After surveying the oblivious newcomers, I groan and break the silence, "They make me feel so old, you know?" I say, nodding my chin toward the junior high students clustered in the front six seats. She laughs in agreement and compliments my ponytail, comments on my barrette². She has a tendency to do that on days like this; it's like she can sense when I'm feeling down on myself. It typically makes me feel a 20
bit better. I try and do the same for her, but I'm a terrible judge of facial expression.

Some idiot in the back just decided to go and open a window, even though the dead admit it's cold outside. Some kids yell that it is only -2° and to shut the window, but I just pull my khaki wool jacket tighter across my chest and kick off my gray flats so I can tuck my feet beneath me and keep my toes warm. My confidant does the same 25

and zips up her black windbreaker, there's a moment of rustling that follows from her arms swishing across her torso while she rearranges her numerous bags. I shiver and we exchange a meaningful look that says simply "why?" because we both know the window will end up open all week.

I look again at her and her mountain of clutter and think, she'll be a crazy bag lady 30
someday... The thought makes me smile since I'm sure she knows it too and I idly
play with the impossible lock ties of my own vintage blue messenger bag. It's at this
time that I really notice how ravenous I am. I pull a small container of leftovers out
of my bag to munch at as we converse and bump along. "Do you remember feeling
six?" she asks while drawing on the frost-covered plexi-glass. For a moment I have 35
to stop chewing and seriously think. Images, hard to conjure, dimly flash; the salty
taste of play-dough, the smell of summer and other various events that I would not
care to dwell on. "No." I finally answer, "I remember some things from being six, but
the feeling escapes me entirely." And it truly did, I just felt well... cold, a little old
and just plain hungry. No matter how hard I tried I couldn't bring back that feeling of 40
uninhibited innocence that currently belongs to my little sister.

While we talked, complained and generally gossiped, the thought lingered in the back of my mind: just why was it so terrifically difficult to return to a long forgotten mindset? It frustrated me terribly that I could remember everything that happened, but it was like watching somebody else. In some weird way I felt as though I was intruding on someone else's experiences, trying to unravel some *alter* me's emotions and motivations. The vehicle stops and I'm returned, full force, to the present. The school gossip is climbing the stairs and I lean over and whisper, "It's too early for this." Shamefully we both plug our ears with headphones and miserably feign sleep. It's all for nothing though since, Mouth, as we'll call her, plops into the seat next to us and pulls the headphones out to talk. For the next fifteen minutes my savior and I exchange casual "help me" glances as we get a month's worth of gossip at 30MPH, and once again Mouth's life story that either of us could repeat word for word.

¹ *senioritis* : decreased motivation toward studies displayed by students who are nearing the end of their school life

² *barrette* : a clasp or pin for holding hair in place

4. The following text is taken from an online advertisement for a luxury apartment called *Pembroke* in Cape Town, South Africa.

(b) Comment on the ways in which language and style are used to promote the accommodation and its location. [15]

(c) The same company posts a similar online advertisement for a different luxury apartment they run in your own part of the world.

Write a section (between 120–150 words) of this advertisement. Base your answer closely on the style and features of the original extract. [10]

Set on the water's edge in the heart of Cape Town's acclaimed waterfront, *Pembroke* is the quintessence of luxury serviced accommodation for either business or holiday, rubbing shoulders with two of the world's leading hotels, The One and Only, and Cape Grace.

Within walking distance of a myriad of bistros, gourmet restaurants, popular and designer shopping, and an internationally renowned aquarium, *Pembroke* is an oasis to which you can retreat after sampling the city's busy delights. 5

Perched above the marina, relax and enjoy a languid drink at sunset, looking out over the water, or contemplate the majesty of Table Mountain after an invigorating day out and about. 10

When only the very best will do for your Cape Town trip, why look any further? Retail food outlets and fine dining establishments are within walking distance. For a special occasion, enlist a private chef for that indulgent gourmet meal. We can arrange tours of the Winelands, as well as trips to experience the exceptional regional flora and fauna (e.g. botanical gardens or whale-spotting). The Cape is also a hotspot for golf with many nearby courses. We will gladly organise airport transfers as well as assist with vehicle hire during your stay. 15

This luxury serviced apartment's bedroom suite, which comes with a plush extra length king bed and luxury linen, commands superb views across the marina to Cape Town's waterfront and the ocean beyond. There is an open-plan dressing room and en suite bathroom with separate wet room and power shower, a regal double bath enjoying views over the harbour, twin basins and bidet. 20

The bed is an extra length king-size, dressed with the finest linens with which to

enjoy your marina bedroom choice of TV, film or music from the flat-screen TV and the surround-sound speakers' link to the apartment's integrated audiovisual system, enhanced by mood lighting to orchestrate the ambience of the moment and all by remote control. 25

The suite enjoys vistas of Table Mountain and the cableway, Signal Hill and the Noon Day Gun (you'll hear its crack at twelve precisely), with The One and Only Hotel and its private villas huddled around the canal below. There are magnificent views of the green belt of Signal Hill from even the shower and bath. The terrace, too, invites you to step out and contemplate this panorama. On a balmy summer's evening, the play of light is remarkable. 30

Extra sleeping accommodation is available in the TV lounge with a pair of specially commissioned daybeds imported from Switzerland. By day, these form very smart and comfortable seating or lounging spaces, while, at night, they can convert into fully functional beds on sprung bases to make a pair of twins or a king bed. This area is serviced by another bathroom with its own wet room and power shower. 35

The fully-equipped kitchen is ergonomic perfection. Built-in appliances, coupled with finger-touch drawers and cupboards, make it heaven for gastronomes. Stylish cobalt blue stone surfaces, punctuated with silver glints, add a dramatic signature to the kitchen's muted off-white and teal¹ colour scheme. Aspiring chefs can communicate directly with their guests in the lounge and dining area, with a serving counter providing direct and practical access from the kitchen. 40

The glass dining table is another spectacular creation and provides generous seating for at least 8 people. The extremely comfortable dining chairs were specially made in a grey-blue leather to match the sofa in the lounge and to marry in with tall units in the kitchen. The lighting of the dining area was created for atmosphere to allow focused lighting on the table while reducing the light level throughout the rest of the open-plan space. All of this can be adjusted at the touch of a button on the remote control. We love to dine here having put together a lovely meal with a good bottle of wine from our cellar collection – also available to our guests. A few tea-lights in white porcelain holders add further to the atmosphere as does the wonderful sound of the music from the speakers. Looking towards the balcony from the table and through the sheer red chilli metallic drapes, the lights of the marina shine like stars. It really is so magical. 45 50 55

¹ teal: blue-green colour

5. The following text is taken from an autobiographical account. The writer recalls his early life in Havana, Cuba, and the time when the leader of the country, Batista, was overthrown by his opponents. At this stage, the writer feels that he is an outsider both in terms of his family and the outside world.

(b) Comment on the ways in which language and style are used to represent the writer's thoughts and feelings. [15]

(c) Later, the writer's mother records the experience of this day in her diary. Write a section of the diary entry (between 120–150 words). Base your answer closely on the material of the original extract. [10]

The world changed while I slept, and much to my surprise, no one had consulted me. That's how it would always be from that day forward. Of course, that's the way it had been all along. I just didn't know it until that morning.

I was barely eight years old, and I had spent hours dreaming of childish things, as children do. My father, who vividly remembered his prior incarnation as King Louis XVI¹ of France, probably dreamt of costume balls, mobs, and guillotines². My mother,

who had no memory of having been Marie Antoinette³, couldn't have shared in his dreams. Maybe she dreamt of hibiscus blossoms and fine silk. Maybe she dreamt of angels, as she always encouraged me to do. "*Sueña con los angelitos,*" she would say: Dream of little angels. The fact that they were little meant they were too cute to be fallen angels. 10

The tropical sun knifed through the gaps in the wooden shutters, as always, extending in narrow shafts of light above my bed, revealing entire galaxies of swirling dust specks. I stared at the dust, as always, rapt⁴. I don't remember getting out of bed. But I do remember walking into my parents' bedroom. Their shutters were open and the room was flooded with light. As always, my father was putting on his trousers over his shoes. He always put on his socks and shoes first, and then his trousers. For years I tried to duplicate that nearly magical feat, with little success. The cuffs of my pants would always get stuck on my shoes and no amount of tugging could free them. More than once I risked an eternity in hell and spat out swear words. 15 20

As he slid his baggy trousers over his brown shoes, effortlessly, Louis XVI broke the news to me: "Batista is gone. He flew out of Havana early this morning. It looks like the rebels have won."

"You lie," I said.

“No, I swear, it’s true,” he replied.

25

Marie Antoinette, my mother, assured me it was true as she applied lipstick, seated at her vanity table. It was a beautiful piece of mahogany furniture with three mirrors: one flat against the wall and two on either side of that, hinged so that their angles could be changed at will. I used to turn the side mirrors so they would face each other and create infinite regressions of one another. Sometimes I would peer in and plunge into infinity. 30

The night before, we had all gone to a wedding at a church in the heart of old Havana. On the way home, we had the streets to ourselves. Not another moving car in sight. Not a soul on the Malecón, the broad avenue along the waterfront. Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette kept talking about the eerie emptiness of the city. Havana was much too quiet for a New Year’s Eve. 35

I can't remember what my older brother, Tony, was doing that morning or for the rest of the day. Maybe he was wrapping lizards in thin copper wire and hooking them up to our train transformer. He liked to electrocute them. He liked it a lot.

My older brother and my adopted brother had both been Bourbon princes in a former 40 life. My adopted brother had been the Dauphin, the heir to the French throne. My father had recognized him on the street one day, selling lottery tickets, and brought him to our house immediately. I was the outsider.

The lizards remained oblivious to the news that day, as always. Contrary to what my brother Tony liked to say as he administered shock treatments to them, the lizards 45 were not deluded in the least. They knew exactly what they were and always would be. Nothing had changed for them. Nothing would ever change. The world already belonged to them whole, free of vice and virtue. They scurried up and down the walls of the patio, and along its brightly colored floor tiles. They lounged on tree branches, sunned themselves on rocks. They clung to the ceilings inside our house, waiting for 50 bugs to eat. They never fell in love, or sinned, or suffered broken hearts. They knew nothing of betrayal or humiliation. They needed no revolutions. They feared neither death nor torture at the hands of children. They worried not about curses, or proof of God's existence, or nakedness. Their limbs looked an awful lot like our own, in the same way that eggplants resembled breasts. Lizards were ugly, to be sure – or so I 55 thought back then. They made me question the goodness of creation.

I could never kiss a lizard, I thought. Never.

Perhaps I envied them. Their place on earth was more secure than ours. We would lose our place, lose our world. They are still basking in the sun. Same way. Day in, day out. 60

¹ *Louis XVI*: the deposed King of France at the time of the French Revolution in 1789, later executed by guillotine by his opponents

² *guillotine*: device which drops a heavy blade, used to execute people

³ *Marie Antoinette*: wife of King Louis XVI, also executed

⁴ *rapt*: enchanted

6. The following text is taken from an account of the writer’s visit to Lagos in Nigeria, Africa.

(a) Comment on the ways in which language and style are used to convey the writer’s thoughts and feelings. [15]

(b) Later the writer produces an account of a similar event she attends in your own country.

Write a section of this account (between 120–150 words). Base your answer closely on the style and features of the original extract. [10]

It is Nigeria’s independence day and there is a flag—a shiny green, white, green—fluttering from the Mercedes Benz in front of us. My brother Okey and I are driving on Victoria Island, where real estate is expensive, although you would not guess so from the pile of rubbish by the roadside, brightly colored bottles and plastic bags—not aesthetically unpleasing, if you can forget that it is stinky rubbish. We’re in traffic. 5
I like to peer into people’s cars in Lagos traffic and imagine lives for them. Okey tries to change lanes, but the other drivers nudge their cars forward as soon as there is a slice of space between them and the next bumper. “Lagos drivers will never let you enter,” Okey mutters. He has only recently moved to Lagos from the quieter Anambra State. The week before, on his way to work, a rusty yellow bus swerved suddenly 10
and shattered his side mirror. The driver came out and lay flat on the ground, saying, “You are a human being like me! You know I cannot do this on purpose!”

The Mercedes ahead of us crawls forward. Sellers are darting around—holding out phone-recharge cards, packets of plantain chips, newspapers, plastic bottles of orange dipped in water to make them look freshly cold. A young boy approaches 15
our car, armed with a spray bottle of soapy water and a rag. Okey turns on the wipers, to discourage him, but the boy still squirts the water and makes to clean the windscreen. Okey increases the wiper speed. The boy glares at him and moves to the next car. The traffic is moving. I buy a *TW* magazine—a pretty, photoshopped newscaster is on the cover—from one of the sellers who also pushes last month’s 20
American Cosmo and British *Elle* against my window. *TW* is published by my friend Adesuwa, and Okey and I are going to an event to mark the second year of its publication. I like Adesuwa’s magazine because it doesn’t do the kind of blind borrowing from America that a lot of other women’s magazines do in Nigeria; it doesn’t have recipes for broccoli or asparagus, or articles about junior and senior 25
proms.

The venue is Fantasy Land, a small amusement park, the sort of place children are taken to see Father Christmas in December. But this time there are chairs arranged around an elevated stage, covered in gauzy white cloth, tied with ribbons, festive, almost wedding-like. The guests are mostly women, and all the ushers are in tight 30
jeans and T-shirts that say TW IS 2. We sing the national anthem, an unusual way to start an event (prayers are the norm), but it is our independence day, after all. I notice that the woman in front of me, who is wearing large gold earrings, does not know the words of the anthem. Okey leans in to ask if I think we will recite the pledge, too, and if we will have to raise a hand in a salute as we did in primary 35
school. We don’t recite the pledge. Instead Adesuwa climbs up to the stage. She is shapely and chic in her jeans and high heels.

“God has been faithful to me,” she says. “I attribute it all to God. Please clap for God!”

Everyone claps furiously. They look at the person next to them to make sure they, too, 40
are clapping for God. And because I am thinking of writing this letter from Lagos, I
decide then that the first line should be this: Lagos is all about God—and also about
cologne and phones. People walk past you and then follows the cloud of perfume or
cologne; with smelling good for the average Lagosian, subtlety is not the point. And
everyone is holding a phone. Phone conversations go on in the row behind me, in 45
the row ahead, mostly repetitions of “Eh? I can’t hear you. The network is bad.”

There is a comedian on stage. People are laughing. He introduces Waje.
Contemporary Nigerian music is exploding and the comedian tells us she is the
“next big thing.” She is a young woman whose stage outfit, a winged skirt, makes 50
her look like a butterfly. She sings in Igbo¹, in a voice so clear it startles, and then
follows a sort of disco performance with lots of prancing about. Obiwon comes on
stage. He is better known than Waje but still not famous enough to be played on the
FM stations often. He has clearly watched a lot of Michael Jackson. He is slender
and is wearing a white jacket and elegant black trousers. He slides and shimmies 55
and his song, “Obim,” is one of the most beautiful I have ever heard. People are
standing up to sway along. I stand, too, and feel, for a moment, that odd sense of
liking people I don’t know.

1 *Igbo*: one of the main languages spoken in Nigeria

7. The following text is taken from an online review of a mobile phone. The reviewer treats the mobile phone as if it were a contestant in the international television programme *The X Factor*, in which judges assess performers who wish to become stars in the music world.

(a) Comment on the ways in which language and style are used to portray the features and qualities of the mobile phone. [15]

(b) Another writer produces a positive review of the same mobile phone.

Write a section of this review (between 120–150 words). Base your answer closely on the material of the original extract. [10]

Verdict

You can blame it on stage fright, but when the lights go up, the 5217 pales in comparison to rival budget phones. Despite its self-proclaimed star quality, it just doesn't have the X factor to win our vote.

We might have our quibbles about their performance in the high-end smart phone market, but one thing the crazy company knows how to do is bring affordable, easy-to-use mobiles to the masses. Well masses, get ready to celebrate, because we're here to review the 5217. It also comes in a talented *X Factor*-themed version, so we're giving this review an *X Factor* theme, too. 5

Enter stage right 10

Hello and welcome to the tech auditions. We've gathered the world's cruellest, most heartless tech judges together to shatter the dreams of aspiring gadgets from all over the country. Without further delay, let's meet our first performer: the 5217 mobile telephone.

The 5217 hails from a little-known European country, and has the dream of bringing happiness to mobile-hungry people with its 3.2-inch resistive touchscreen, built-in accelerometer and 2-megapixel camera. Will that support be enough to impress our judges? 15

FIND OUT AFTER THE BREAK.

Fat lip 20

Stood trembling before us on stage, we have to say the 5217 isn't much of a looker. Rather chunky at 111 by 51.7 by 15.5 mm, this mobile doesn't have the rockstar chic of more slender handsets, and it's liable to bulk out your pocket somewhat if you stuff it in your jeans. With a dull, silvery sheen covering the front and back of the handset, there's not a great deal of glamour to go around, either. The sourest note is an ugly plastic lip that surrounds the 5217's faceplate, and really breaks up what could have been a smooth, sleek design. 25

Around the edges of this frumpy phone you'll find mechanical volume keys, a camera button, power switch, 3.5 mm socket for headphones, micro-USB port and two covered ports for your SIM and microSD card. 30

So, not much of a looker then – our judges' fingers are poised over the buzzers. But looks can be deceiving, so we're going to give the 5217 a chance.

Sadly, unlocking the 3.2-inch screen and revealing the display doesn't give us too much cause for celebration. When this mobile opens its mouth we can see that the display is set quite far back from the actual screen. It's a little disappointing because, although the display is quite bright and offers a decent resolution (640 x 360 pixels), that extra distance makes it look a little dull. Needless to say, photos and video on this phone won't look great. As far as the display goes, the 5217, it's a 'no' from us. 35

The interface itself will be familiar to anyone who's owned or used a similar phone before. The layout is pretty simple and intuitive, which definitely works in this phone's favour. Even though it's a resistive rather than capacitive touchscreen, we found tapping out texts and navigating the phonebook was reasonably straightforward. 40

On the other hand, this phone falls flat as soon as you try and do anything a little more complicated with it. The Web applications aren't very intuitive, and they're so loaded with security pop-ups that doing anything in a hurry quickly becomes a real pain. The only thing that stopped this mobile from being escorted from the stage was a generous smattering of pre-loaded software, such as Facebook, MySpace and Amazon apps. The 5217 definitely shows potential here, as we can see these apps coming in handy. 45

What about the 5217's 2-megapixel camera? Will it wow the judges? Or is this a national embarrassment? We'll tell you. AFTER THE BREAK. Ba bum bum. 50

Paparazzi

Welcome back. Before the break, we saw the 5217's Web capabilities failing to impress the judges. It's dying on stage. Can the 5217's camera tech save it from elimination? 55

Actually, yes! The 2-megapixel snapper on the rear of this bad boy might not be stage-stealing hardware on its own, but the camera software on offer here is impressively swift. Affordable mobiles like this often pack fruit-throwingly terrible software, creating a sluggish snapshot experience that prevents you from capturing the moment. Not this shutterbug. We were equally impressed with the speed of the camcorder app and the frame rate of recorded footage during playback. 60

The nifty camera might have distracted our judges momentarily, but the disappointing lack of 3G and Wi-Fi connectivity is a dealbreaker. The final, unforgivable flaw of this phone is that the only *X Factor* content included is a pre-installed app, which shows you a few videos from the show before crashing spectacularly. Since there's obviously been so little effort made to theme this phone, we sort of wish we hadn't gone to so much trouble to write this tortuous themed review. Security, escort this phone from the stage. 65

8. In the following text the writer describes his relatives' experiences just before German forces entered Vienna, in Austria, in 1938.

(a) Comment on the ways in which language and style are used to portray the events and atmosphere of the day. [15]

(b) Basing your answer closely on the style and features of the original extract, continue the account (between 120–150 words). You do not need to bring the account to a close. [10]

It is a flood of brown shirts. There are taxi horns blaring and there are men with weapons on the streets, and somehow the police have swastika armbands. There are trucks rushing along the Ring¹, past the house, past the university towards the Town Hall. And the trucks have swastikas on them, and the trams have swastikas on them, and there are young men and boys hanging off them, shouting and waving. 5

And someone turns out the lights in the library, as if being in the dark will make them invisible, but the noise reaches into the house, into the room, into their lungs. Someone is being beaten in the street below. What are they going to do? How long can you pretend this is not happening?

Some friends pack a suitcase and go out into the street, push through these swirling, eddying masses of ecstatic citizens of Vienna to get to the Westbahnhof. The night train to Prague leaves at 11.15, but by nine it is completely packed. Men in uniforms swarm through the train and pull people off. 10

By 11.15 Nazi flags are hanging from the parapets of government ministries. At half-past midnight President Miklas gives in and approves the cabinet. At 1.08 a.m. a Major Klausner announces from the balcony 'with deep emotion in this festive hour that Austria is free, that Austria is National Socialist.' 15

There are queues of people on foot or in cars at the Czech frontier. The radio is now playing the Badenweiler and the Hofenfriedberger, German military marches. These are interspersed with slogans. The first Jewish shop windows are broken. 20

And it is on that first night that the sounds of the street become shouting in the courtyard, echoing around the walls and on the roof. There are feet pounding up the stairs, the thirty-three shallow steps to the apartment on the second floor.

There are fists on the door, someone leaning on the bell, and there are eight or ten, a knot of them in some sort of uniform – some with swastika armbands, some familiar. Some are still boys. It is one o'clock in the morning and no one is asleep, everyone is dressed. Viktor and Emmy and Rudolf are pushed into the library. 25

This first night they swarm through the apartment. There are shouts from across the courtyard, as a couple of them have found the salon with its French ensembles of furniture and porcelain. There is laughter from someone as Emmy's closet is ransacked. Someone bangs out a tune on the piano keys. Some men are in the study pulling out drawers, roughing up the desks, pushing the folios off the stand in the corner. They come into the library and tip the globes from their stands. This convulsive disordering, messing up, is barely looting; it is a stretching of muscles, a cracking of the knuckles, a loosening up. The people in the corridors are checking, looking, exploring, working out what is here. 30 35

They take the silver candlesticks from the dining-room. Silver cigarette boxes, money held in a clip from Viktor's study. A small Russian clock, pink enamel and gold, that

rang the hours in the salon. And the large clock from the library with its golden dome held up by columns. 40

The last door they reach is Emmy's dressing-room in the corner, and they sweep everything off the desk she uses as a dressing-table: the small mirror and the porcelain and the silver boxes and the flowers sent up from the meadows, and they drag the desk out into the corridor. They push Emmy and Viktor and Rudolf against the wall, and three of them heave the desk and send it crashing over the handrail until, with a sound of splintering wood and gilt and marquetry, it hits the stone flags of the courtyard below. 45

This desk – the wedding present from Paris – takes a long time to fall. The sounds ricochet off the glass roof. The broken drawers scatter letters across the courtyard.

It is not that you cannot sleep. You cannot go to bed. When these men and boys finally go, they say that they'll be back, and you know they mean it. Emmy is wearing her pearls and they take them off. They take her rings. Someone pauses to spit handsomely at your feet. And they clatter down the stairs, shouting until they reach the courtyard. One takes a run to kick the debris, and they are out through the doors onto the Ring, a large clock under an overcoated arm. 50 55

Snow is on its way.

All that day, squadrons of planes fly low over Vienna. Viktor and Emmy do not know what to do. They do not know where to go, as that Sunday morning the first German troops cross the border to be met with flowers and crowds. The story is that Hitler is returning home to visit the grave of his mother. 60

¹*Ring* : ring road

9. The following text is taken from an account of the writer's experience of extreme weather in Vietnam, in South East Asia.

(a) Comment on the ways in which language and style are used to convey the impact of the weather and people's reactions to it. [15]

(b) The writer produces another account of extreme weather (real or imaginary) in a different part of the world.

Write a section of this account (between 120–150 words). Base your answer closely on the style and features of the original extract. [10]

Mornings in Vietnam in the rainy season: I must remember to push the mattress up on its side when I get up, before doing anything else. If not, it becomes heavier and heavier with moisture, the pungent stink of mildew¹ pinching my nose at night.

In the rainy season, everything I do is a strategy for coping with the damp chill and

the water. I didn't grow up here. The water infiltrates my consciousness. I learn to accept it, like the others around me, to see it as a minor disruption. 5

In the rainy season, I must remember to keep my showers to a few minutes, no matter how good it feels to have the water pounding my back, soothing away the chill. The water slowly seeps through the cement between the shower stall and bedroom, impregnates the wall, a sheen of tiny droplets over my bed. Another thing to remember: never leave the pillows propped up against the wall. 10

In the rainy season, I mustn't boil water for tea or cook anything that produces too much steam, adding to the weight of moisture hanging in the air. The excess humidity settles: a visible mist upon the clothes hanging in my closet, turning them into a new life form, furry and spotted. Every surface a wick for moisture. 15

In the rainy season, I am thankful that my home is in this neighbourhood, this alley, so much higher than the main road. While the rich sleep in their attics, or on their roofs, the swirling, muddy water laps at my door sill, but doesn't enter.

I grab my umbrella and head out for breakfast. I push open the waterlogged left panel of my carved wooden door. My umbrella mushrooms out with a snap and a dull whomp, displacing water-filled air. Rain sheets down from our red tiled roof. 20

My nephew, radiant in his purple rain poncho, a canary yellow motorcycle helmet pushed down over the hood, stands under the eaves, rain rat-a-tat-tatting down from the roof onto the helmet. A duet with the drumming rain on my umbrella. Pausing a moment in the ankle-deep water, we listen to the call-and-response rhythm we make together. He laughs a great belly-laugh and roars off on his motorbike, the water a tall rooster-tail behind him. 25

Looking at the world from under my rose-coloured umbrella, I wade down the alley with its gold walls, under grey skies and green leaves. The lane falls to meet the road. The water rises to my knees, threatens my jeans, rolled up thigh-high. Each step an eternity, pushing against the flow, my toes seeking the edge of the sidewalk. Stepping out into the main road triggers a memory from the year before: this corner 30

is where the pavement dips into a pothole, where I twisted an ankle under the murky water. 35

I can't see my feet, or even my knees. The Perfume River, not knowing its boundaries, or refusing to have any, overflows the banks, invades the road and climbs the steps of shops and homes.

In the rainy season, instead of my usual coffee and soup on the bank of the river, I head for the very back of a restaurant I never set foot in during good weather. 40

The tables near the front are prone to the fine mist that kicks up from the water-skimmed entrance, pummelled by the onslaught of rain. I'm lucky to find an empty seat. Waiting for breakfast, I watch the river swelling over the road, up the three steps and into the crowded restaurant.

Inhaling the aroma of bitter coffee, I watch boys swimming and casting their fishing lines, shouting and laughing in the river that used to be the road. A group of teens cycles past, four abreast, wearing purple and pink ponchos. Laughing, pushing at the pedals, they move in slow motion, tires submerged. One of them struggles but cannot avoid a branch drifting into his path. 45

Across from the restaurant, several tourists raise their cameras to snap souvenirs of a small girl hugging her wiry dog on the roof of her home. Down the road the water is higher; another dog stands on the hood of a taxi, barking at the water as it rises, lapping over the hood. 50

Awaiting my food, I peer through the breakfast bustle to watch the tourists point their cameras at the rising river and the falling rain. They laugh and curse and squeal as the water soaks their pant legs, rolled up to their crotches, giving them a bowlegged gait² as they enter the restaurant in squelching shoes. 55

After breakfast, I venture out of the shelter of the restaurant and back into the flood, the chill soaking into my bones. Bits of flotsam—a plastic water bottle, a piece of someone's front door—bob against me as I struggle against the current until I reach my alley. I wonder if this is the year the water will rise up my walls. 60

¹ *mildew* : damp mould

² *gait* : way of walking

10. The following text is taken from an article which describes the writer's experience of returning to her home country of Liberia, West Africa.

(a) Comment on the ways in which language and style are used to convey the writer's thoughts and feelings. [15]

(b) Basing your answer closely on the style and features of the original extract, continue the account (between 120–150 words). You do not need to bring the account to a close. [10]

Every day of those two weeks in Ghana, my soul ached to be home in Liberia. The ocean behind my room at the Afia Beach Hotel in Accra teased me with its flapping and rolling all day and night. But, this was not yet home, I told myself. I wanted to see Liberia again, where not only the ocean waves had survived a bloody war, where the sunshine also reigned, a home of lost ghosts and falling rockets, of runaways like us who had already been forgotten by the stay-at-home survivors, a home of lost youths, wandering the streets after their survival of one of the world's bloodiest wars, a home of tears and unimaginable stories of cruelty.

5

I wanted to hug my father again, to see him in his old age, his gray hair that had defied death and time, to see my brothers again after the lost years of their youth, the war having sapped opportunities away from them. They were the younger ones, the ones that had not yet died in all of the after-war diseases and calamities. I wanted to cry and laugh with them, survivors who still needed answers.

10

Today, I was on a Kenyan airliner. The plane was filled with others who had been away too long; they'd also been forgotten. Sitting next to me was a young woman looking younger than a teenager. Her light brown skin sparkled with beauty. She seemed a 'been to',¹ with a soft face made up to the letter, her smile, prepared. On her fingers were gold and diamond rings. Bracelets and fine linens draped around her arms as if she were some queen from a past world. She had ordered a huge perfume case from the airline's Duty Free catalogue, so the stewardess came looking for her. She pushed her hands from under the *hajib*² to receive the package from the beautiful Kenyan stewardess. She quickly opened the package to show it off to me. Pride took over her features as she examined the perfume, smiling at me. We were not yet introduced.

15

20

25

She was only twenty-two, I would learn; and her English, simple and rough, very

much in contrast to her appearance. She had not gone to school all these years, I thought to myself, yet, she looked schooled and well-kept. She quickly excused her attire: she was flying in from a far away country in the Middle East. 'I'm a real Liberian girl,' she smiled. She was coming in from Saudi Arabia where she had stationed herself comfortably with an Italian man. Her conversation was not brief. She pulled her hands out of her chiffon-laced *hajib* and other wraps every few minutes to speak with her hands even though I could understand Liberian English perfectly. She lived an *arrangement*, she said softly. The man was old, much older, but he took good care of her and her family. He was old enough to be her grandfather, she smiled. But that was okay. There was room, she said, for him to do what he wanted and room for her too, to move around in their arrangement. 30 35

Here she was, she told me, flying back and forth whenever she wanted. She'd been everywhere, she said, everywhere in the Middle East and Africa. She was on her way to see her mother in Liberia, to give them gifts, to take care of those who had survived the years. With his money lavished on her, she could come twice a month if she wanted. She smiled, looking into my eyes as if for approval. 40

I turned away to the window. I was in the window seat. I love window seats. Because of invitations to read and present my poetry, I am a frequent flyer around the US,

and now, though less frequently, outside the US. I had taken to window seats over 45 the last few years. They are my solace when I end up next to an annoying passenger

— or a sweet little Liberian girl who had chosen the soft road through the rocky desert the war had set her on. I wanted to jump through that window today. I was angry — not at the girl, her mother, or her man. I was angry at the world, at the war,

and at those who had brought this sort of calamity upon us. I was angry that such a beautiful, soft-skinned girl looking like my own daughter had given herself away to an old man because of the times, had sold herself into slavery. 50

I kept looking through the window. I could not look at her now, I told myself.

I turned away from the window and took her in my arms. She could have been my daughter, I thought. She held on tightly to me, tears rolling down her cheeks as I too, wept. 55

¹ *'been to'*: a well-travelled person

² *hajib*: veil or body covering

11. The following extract is taken from a speech to the Organisation of African Unity given by Kwame Nkrumah, President of Ghana, in 1963.

a. Comment on the ways in which language and style are used to persuade the audience. [15]

b. Continue the speech (between 120–150 words). You do not have to bring it to a close. Base

your answer closely on the style and features of the original extract. [10]

Our objective is African union now. There is no time to waste. We must unite now or perish.

African unity is, above all, a political kingdom which can only be gained by political means. Our people supported us in our fight for independence because they believed that African governments could cure the ills of the past in a way which

could never be accomplished under colonial rule.

If, therefore, now that we are independent we allow the same conditions to exist that existed in colonial days, all the resentment which overthrew colonialism will be mobilised against us. The resources are there. It is for us to marshal them in the active service of our people. Unless we do this by our concerted efforts, within the framework of our combined planning, we shall not progress at the tempo demanded by today's events and the mood of our people. The symptoms of our troubles will grow, and the troubles themselves become chronic. It will then be too late for pan-African unity to secure for us stability and tranquillity in our labours for a continent of social justice and material wellbeing. 10 15

What need is there for us to remain hewers of wood and drawers of water for the industrialised areas of the world? It is said, of course, that we have no capital, no industrial skill, no communications, and no internal markets, and that we cannot even agree among ourselves how best to utilise our resources for our own social needs. Yet all stock exchanges in the world are preoccupied with Africa's gold, diamonds, uranium, platinum, copper and iron ore. 20

Our capital flows out in streams to irrigate the whole system of Western economy. Africa provides more than 60% of the world's gold. A great deal of the uranium for nuclear power, of copper for electronics, of titanium for supersonic projectiles, of iron and steel for heavy industries, of other minerals and raw materials for lighter industries – the basic economic might of the foreign powers – comes from our continent. 25

Are you afraid to tackle the bull by the horn? For centuries, Africa has been the milch cow¹ of the Western world. Was it not our continent that helped the Western world to build up its accumulated wealth? 30

We have the resources. It was colonialism in the first place that prevented us from accumulating the effective capital; but we ourselves have failed to make full use of our power in independence to mobilise our resources for the most effective take-off into thorough-going economic and social development.

We have been too busy nursing our separate states to understand fully the basic need of our union, rooted in common purpose, common planning and common endeavour. A union that ignores these fundamental necessities will be but a sham. 35

It is only by uniting our productive capacity and the resultant production that we can amass capital. And once we start, the momentum will increase. With capital controlled by our own banks, harnessed to our own true industrial and agricultural 40 development, we shall make our advance.

We shall accumulate machinery and establish steel works, iron foundries and factories; we shall link the various states of our continent with communications by land, sea, and air. We shall cable from one place to another, phone from one place

to the other and astound the world with our hydro-electric power; we shall drain 45 marshes and swamps, clear infested areas, feed the undernourished, and rid our people of parasites and disease.

(c) *milch cow* : milking cow

12 The following text is taken from a travel book. It describes the writer's experience of staying in Tahiti, an island in French Polynesia, an area of the southern Pacific Ocean.

(a) Comment on the ways in which language and style are used to create a sense of mood and

place. [15]

(b) Later in her book, the writer describes a different type of location which has also affected her thoughts and feelings.

Write a section (between 120–150 words) of this description. Base your answer closely on the

style and features of the writing in the original extract. [10]

My trip began in paradise. In Tahiti. It was one week before the French nuclear tests on the Mururoa atoll¹, one week before protestors' riots and looting ripped apart the Tahitian capital, Papeete. I saw none of that coming. I had never been to a more peaceful place.

I was staying in a youth hostel, and it wasn't long before a grubby group of us⁵ invaded the Hyatt Regency Hotel, occupying the terrace restaurant and securing seats overlooking the sea. We wanted to improve on our view. We wanted beer, nuts and cocktails at eight dollars a shot, and the feeling of life being as close to perfect as it could ever be.

It came close that night. A magnificent South Pacific sunset graced our efforts. ¹⁰ Gilded waves, a blazing sky containing every shade of red imaginable. We gaped

at the west, our eyes never leaving it as we talked lazily about many things. Why Americans never travel anywhere. Why Germans always do. Didn't Marlon Brando² have an island somewhere around there? Didn't his daughter kill herself? We all looked over at the dreadlocked Brit who asked this last question and admonished ¹⁵ him with our gazes: inappropriate subject. We would not tolerate such questions. Not now. Not in front of such perfection.

Every day in Tahiti ended with sentimental perfection, as if it were always the last ³ day before the end of the world. Beauty was ostentatious there. The air reeked of *tiare*² and orange blossoms like a land wearing too much perfume; walking the streets ²⁰ meant treading on flowers shed like autumnal leaves. I wondered absently when I'd

be dropped to earth again, a mortal. Too soon, surely. And I wasn't yet prepared for the sobering jolt.

The quietest of the group, I was surprised when the others joined me in silence.

To the west, the night was taking over, creating an edge to the colors and slowly ²⁵ blowing out the scene. Mauve. Dark maroon. Slowly, slowly. The sky and sea joining. A slice of moon asserting itself. The sounds of insects. A cooler ocean breeze.

And night.

Something akin to disappointment overtook us. The beers and cocktails became much too expensive for us. The Hyatt Regency Hotel too stuffy. We counted out our 30 loose change, piled it on the table, and left to the relief of the hotel staff.

Heading to the youth hostel with everyone in the back of an old truck, I felt like one of Tahiti's *tupapau*—ghosts—which people believed wandered endlessly and could only be persuaded to rest by lighting a kerosene lamp in the night. I was already feeling anxious to leave Tahiti. Inexplicably, I always needed to be somewhere else. 35 I'd left behind so much this time. Graduate school, my teaching job, my chance at

having some savings. A boyfriend who loved me and whom I might have allowed myself to love back.

The stars above, for all of the truck's speed, didn't seem to move. The wind lashed our hair back, sent our clothes beating upon us. Tahiti and its people appeared in 40 glimpses of light: an old man walking beneath a street lamp, a pale ocean, a mother on her front steps calling to a child.

I looked at the young people around me. Most of them had been in Tahiti for months, glorying like Fletcher Christian's mutineers⁴ in how successfully they had evaded the rest of the world and its responsibilities. They lived, as I did, out of a backpack. 45

They spent their nights getting Polynesian tattoos and drinking beer around bonfires on the sand, a society of merry vagabonds. I was always tentative about joining them, sitting on the fringe of the circle of light. I liked to watch them, wondering what happened when paradise officially became one's home. Did the escapes stop then?

Did one live a charmed life? For their lives, these happy people's, indeed seemed 50 charmed.

I'd found that the most paradisiacal places in the world only distracted me for a few blessed days. It was like having an out-of-body experience: I stepped away from myself and my past, and resided in turquoise waters and white sands, pretending

I wouldn't ever have to return to anything. Rest and relaxation, people called it. I 55 called it hope.

(c) *atoll* : coral island

(d) *Marlon Brando* : a Hollywood film star

(e) *tiare* : a type of gardenia plant

(f) *Fletcher Christian's mutineers* : sailors, led by Fletcher Christian, who rebelled against their commanding officer on an expedition to Tahiti in the eighteenth century

13 The following text describes how the writer, an English tutor, tries to help one of her students to take life less seriously. They are sitting in a Japanese sushi restaurant where food travels by conveyor belt.

(a) Comment on the ways in which language and style are used to present the characters and the setting. [15]

(b) Later, Yumiko records her thoughts and feelings about the evening in her diary.

Write a section (between 120–150 words) of the diary entry. Base your answer closely on the material of the original extract. [10]

That night at the cheap sushi place, Yumiko was complaining about her boyfriend. Yumiko didn't really love him. He was boring. A purple running shoe rounded the bend behind a tub of wasabi¹. I blinked and it was still there, unhurriedly cruising the conveyor belt.

"... but love is not everything and I am getting old." She bit her glossy lower lip. "You understand, Natalie?" 5

Maguro², shrimp, melon slice, wasabi, shoe.

Yumiko saw it too. The running shoe crept by, its frayed laces dangling over the edge of the counter.

Laughing, I turned to look at the other diners. The room was wide and white, with four 10 rows of blood-orange seats lining the snakelike progression of the sushi track. The ceiling spewed out fluorescent light over the constant noise—children squealing, waiters singing welcome, men barking orders into tableside speakers. "I wonder what kind of person wears a purple shoe," Yumiko said without smiling. She paused to brush her long braid over her shoulder. 15

I was still laughing. "This is truly awesome."

"It's not funny."

"Don't worry," I said.

"Yes, you're right," she said, and relief spilled over her face. She scooped a heap of ginger out of a plastic bin on the table. I peeked across the restaurant. A few people 20 were smiling and pointing.

She looked across the restaurant. "My father thinks Satoshi will be a good husband."

I shoved a thick slab of salmon and rice into my mouth. The fish was a little oily, and everything melted on my tongue. I reached for another piece while I was still chewing, then realized Yumiko was waiting for me to say something. I swallowed. 25

I saw the high heel only as it reached Yumiko's right shoulder. It was black and it reflected stripes of light.

She gasped. "We should leave, maybe."

I laughed, listening as the key of the restaurant changed from flat to sharp, with high-pitched tones of wonder winding through the place. "No way we're leaving now! 30

Look!”

Across the aisle, a woman was wiping the face of a tiny baby in a booster seat. The little girl behind her had slipped off her shoe and was reaching up toward the moving belt. Her smile, stretched to its limits, burst into a shriek of laughter as she carefully 35 set the shoe down. She stood up on the bright plastic seat and leaned over the plates of sushi to watch it disappear.

“I cannot believe that girl!” Yumiko said. “Just watch what her mother will say.”

The mother finally did turn back to the girl, who was still leaning against the counter.

She looked at her daughter standing in the seat, and took one look at her bare foot 40 before she threw her head back, giggling. She spun back to the baby in the booster seat, who was now kicking his feet, riding an imaginary bicycle. Off came a green knitted bootie. From mother’s hand to daughter’s, and onto the belt between two pieces of eel.

I grinned at Yumiko, who was still chewing absently, and bent down.

45

“No! Stop! Don’t do it please.” Her voice was desperate.

“What’s wrong? This is funny. Come on, everyone’s laughing.” I patted a passing green tennis shoe.

“I think I’m going to call Satoshi.” She reached for her phone. Her hand trembled. I reached across the table and touched her arm.

50

“Yumiko, come on. No one’s getting hurt.”

All around us, groups were shouting, laughing, taking plates off the conveyor belt in order to make more room for the shoes that were beginning to crowd it. Waitresses continued buzzing, whisking beers and soup bowls with the efficiency of worker bees.

55

As the noise level of the restaurant billowed up towards hysterical, Yumiko smiled. Her phone rang. She looked at me; we both looked at the phone. The room broke into applause and instead of answering the call she swung her legs around to stand up on her seat along with me and some other customers. We whistled and whooped.

Her phone was still ringing.

³ *wasabi*: spicy vegetable sauce

⁴ *maguro*: tuna sushi dish

PAPER 2: IMAGINATIVE WRITING AND WRITING FOR AN AUDIENCE

1. Write the opening to a story called *The Tower*. In your writing, create a sense of mystery and suspense.
2. Write two contrasting pieces (between 300–450 words each), the first about the behaviour of a comedian performing in public and the second about the same comedian's rather different private personality. In your writing, create a sense of character and mood.
3. Write a piece called *Rain*, in which the narrator describes in detail her or his experience of unusual weather. In your writing, focus on colours and sounds to help your reader imagine the scene.

Section B: Writing for an audience

4. A property agent advertises two houses for sale, on the company's website. One house is moderately priced, the other very expensive. Write the text for the advertisements (between 300–450 words each). In your writing, create a strong sense of the houses' merits and desirability.
5. A magazine aimed at teenagers publishes an article called *Stress – What Stress?* The article offers guidance to its readers on how to cope with preparing for different situations in life (for example, coping with schoolwork or getting a job for the first time). Write the text for the article. In your writing, create a sense of practical advice and positive thinking.
6. Your local library publishes a leaflet called *The Joys of Reading*, as part of a campaign to promote the activity. Write the text for the leaflet. In your writing, create a sense of the pleasures and benefits that reading can bring.
7. Write the opening to a story called *The Unsolved Crime*. In your writing, create a sense of tension and suspense.

8. Write two contrasting pieces (between 300– 450 words each), the first about a quiet and undisturbed location and the second about the same place after it has become a busy tourist attraction. In your writing, create a sense of setting and mood.
9. Write a piece called *Heatwave*, in which the narrator describes in detail her or his experience of unusual weather. In your writing, focus on colours and sounds to help your reader imagine the scene.

Section B: Writing for an audience

10. A magazine aimed at teenagers publishes two short articles which consider the ways the media represent young people. One article takes a positive view of the subject, the other a much more negative one. Write the text for the articles (between 300–450 words each). In your writing, create a sense of opposing viewpoints and attitudes.
11. Write a section of the script for a radio documentary called *Young at Heart*. The script is aimed at people who are reaching retirement age. In your writing, create a sense of how people of this age can still enjoy interests and events they may consider themselves too old for.
12. A sports and leisure centre is trying to attract interested beginners to sample its facilities. To do so, it publishes different articles about the benefits of the various activities on offer on its website. Write the text for one of the articles. In your writing, create a sense of a positive and enthusiastic attitude.

Section A: Imaginative writing

13. Write a descriptive piece called *The Theme Park*. In your writing, focus on specific sights and sounds to help your reader imagine the scene.
14. Write the opening to a story called *The Witness*, in which some of the people and events of a major historical incident (real or imaginary) are seen from the viewpoint of a minor character present at the time.

15. 'A set of keys, a passport, a credit card – these were all that remained on the table.'

Continue the short story (although you do not have to bring it to a conclusion). In your writing, create a sense of character and setting.

Section B: Writing for an audience

16. A travel magazine invites you to write a feature called *My Favourite Walk*, in order to encourage tourists to see and learn about the place where you live. Write the text of the article. In your writing, create a sense of interest and enjoyment.

17. Two people with experience of working in education have been invited to contribute to a debate on the theme *Are Standards Rising or Falling?* Write the text of their speeches (between 300–450 words each). In your writing, create a sense of opposing attitudes and viewpoints.

18. A website aimed at an older audience publishes a guide called *Keeping Up to Date*. It offers readers guidance on how to use examples of modern technology (such as mobile phones and smart televisions) and the benefits they offer. Write the text for the guide. In your writing, create a sense of practical advice and enthusiasm.

Section A: Imaginative writing

19. Write the opening to a story called *Robot World*. In your writing, create a detailed sense of a futuristic and mysterious environment.

20. 'The buildings seemed to waken as daylight dawned. Light glinted from windows and gradually the noise of traffic could be heard rumbling in the distance.'

Continue this descriptive piece of writing (although you do not have to bring it to a conclusion). In your writing, focus in detail on colours and sounds to help your reader imagine the scene.

21. Write the opening to a short story in which some of the people and events from a well-known book or film are seen from the perspective of one of the less significant characters in the original piece.

Section B: Writing for an audience

22. A magazine aimed at an older audience publishes an article called *Keeping in Touch*. The article is a guide on the use and the benefits of social networking sites. Write the text for the article. In your writing, create a sense of practical advice and enthusiasm.

23. Write the script for a podcast called *Secret Places*, aimed at both local residents and new visitors to the area where you live. The script describes unusual and less well-known locations. In your writing, create a sense of interest and enjoyment.

24. A company director and a factory worker have been invited to contribute to a debate on the theme *The Rights Workers Should Have*. Write the text of their speeches (between 300–450 words each). In your writing, create a sense of opposing attitudes and viewpoints.

Section A: Imaginative writing

25. Write the opening to a story called *The Witness*, in which a character has to come to terms with what she or he has experienced. In your writing, create a sense of character and motivation.

26. A short story ends with these words:

'Spring had arrived: the sun seemed to offer the promise of a bright and glorious future.'

Write the rest of the story which occurs before these words. In your writing, create a sense of setting and mood.

27. Write a descriptive piece called *The Factory*. In your writing, focus on sounds, colours and textures to help your reader imagine the scene.

Section B: Writing for an audience

28. Write the script for a voiceover of a promotional film called *Reasons to Invest Here*, aimed at overseas businesses. In your writing, create a sense of the advantages that could come with investment in your country.

29. Two speakers have been invited to contribute to a debate on the theme *Scientific Research Should Have Its Limits*. Write the text of their speeches (between 300–450 words each). In your writing, create a sense of differing attitudes and viewpoints.

30. A travel website aimed at young people publishes an article called *Safe and Sound*. The article offers guidance and advice to young people wishing to travel abroad. Write the text for the article. In your writing, create a sense of the pleasures and difficulties young travellers might encounter.

Section A: Imaginative writing

31. Write the opening to a novel called *Escape from the City*, in which a narrator describes her or his experiences of moving to a rural area. In your writing create a sense of the narrator's outlook and mood.

32. Write two contrasting pieces (300–450 words each), the first about a place before a flood and the second about the same place after a flood. In your writing create a mood and a sense of place.

33. Write a descriptive piece called *The Workplace*. In your writing focus on colours, sounds and textures to help your reader imagine the scene.

Section B: Writing for an audience

34. A technology journalist writes an article called *The Future is Being Revolutionised*. The article describes how new inventions are going to shape the next twenty years and the benefits they will bring. Write the text for the article. In your writing create a sense of enthusiasm and excitement.

35. Two politicians have been invited to contribute to a debate on the theme *Giving Aid to the Poor Does More Harm Than Good*. Write the text of their speeches (300–450 words each). In your writing create a sense of opposing attitudes and viewpoints. (The politicians may be real or invented.)

36. Write the script for a voiceover of a TV documentary called *You're Only Young Once*. The script is aimed at a youth market. In your writing create a sense of the joys and troubles that life at this age can bring.

