Cambridge Assessment International Education

# Cambridge IGCSE™

**FIRST LANGUAGE ENGLISH** **0500/21**

Paper 2 Directed Writing and Composition **May/June 2021**

INSERT **2 hours**

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**INFORMATION**

- This insert contains the reading texts.
- You may annotate this insert and use the blank spaces for planning. **Do not write your answers** on the insert.

This document has **4** pages. Any blank pages are indicated.


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Read **both** texts, and then answer **Question 1** on the question paper.

## Text A: Green shopping won't save the planet

*The following text is an article about individuals and the environment.*

It's easy being green … too easy. From adorable reusable shopping bags to plastic-free beauty products, the proliferation of green goods makes doing our bit for the planet fun. Indeed, a poll released recently found that most Americans, for example, are shopping for the good of the planet: 76 per cent said they'd bought a product specifically because they thought it was better for the environment.

Shopping habits have become one manifestation of how saving the planet has become a matter of personal change rather than of collective action. However, every example of major environmental progress – reducing acid rain, improving air quality, restoring the ozone layer – has been the result of national legislation or a global treaty. We reduced acid rain by restricting industry's emissions, not by all going out and sprinkling bicarbonate on sensitive forests and lakes. Ozone-chomping CFC chemicals were banned by international laws, not by everyone giving up spray cans and air conditioning.

Environmental progress is made by forcing people and industry to stop doing environmentally bad things and start doing environmentally good things, not by relying on individuals' green goodwill. Recycling figures are up in most countries but acquiring consumer goods, a very environmentally damaging pursuit, is also up. In the 'reduce, reuse, recycle' mantra, recycling is the last resort, after all.

Just to be clear: recycling, cutting energy use, buying locally and the rest of the 'what you can do' agenda is better than the opposite. I use public transport (easy in cities, of course), walk almost everywhere else, recycle, sun-dry clothes, keep the house cold in winter and hot in summer – some sacrifice for the sake of the planet, let me tell you! The problem with the emphasis on changing individual behaviour is this: it makes too many of us believe we have done our part.

In her new book, 'Green Gone Wrong', journalist Heather Rogers calls the emphasis on individual green acts – especially shopping – rather than collective ones, 'lazy environmentalism'. But it's nearly ubiquitous. When Rogers gives speeches about garbage, someone always tells her they thought 'we could cure our environmental ills by consuming the right products,' she writes.

The message that we cannot consume our way out of climate change, or shop our way out of crashing fisheries, or vanishing species or depleted seas isn't as much fun as, 'Buy green!' Compared with the scale of the disaster, changing individual behaviour is pathetically inadequate.

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**Text B: Giving up hope won't save the planet**

*The following text is an interview given by a well known conservationist.*

We are destroying the world at a very rapid rate; many people are giving up hope and thinking, 'Well, there's nothing I can do on my own.' The rain forests are disappearing everywhere. Big dams are draining whole countries of their water supply as water becomes more precious than gold; there's mining, there's fracking, there's drilling for oil. We're in the middle of a great species extinction; we're losing biodiversity everywhere and we're burning fossil fuels very, very fast.

We are breeding billions of animals just to eat them. This means that whole habitats are being destroyed to grow grain; fossil fuels are being used to take the grain to the animals, the animals to slaughter, and the meat to the table. In addition, the animals are producing masses of methane gas, and that's a very virulent greenhouse gas which speeds up climate change.

We need to start thinking about how everybody can lead more sustainable lives. The wealthy need to start thinking about their environmental footprint – What do I buy? What do I eat? What do I wear? How was it made? Where did it come from? – and thinking whether they need all the stuff that they buy, the meat they eat and the plastics they use.

I support an environmental project for young people called Roots and Shoots. It started with 12 high school students in Tanzania, and now has members from kindergarten to university in 100 countries. The project's main message is that every individual, every school or college, every community makes a difference every day. Every group chooses itself three projects that are important to the area around them and that can make things better for people, for animals and for the environment – everything from planting trees to recycling, from reducing waste or changing what money is spent on within their organisation, to growing organic food.

Young people care about the planet and their future on it. We have a window of opportunity for making some changes, for slowing down climate change. But it's going to require a lot of effort.

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