

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS  
International General Certificate of Secondary Education

**FIRST LANGUAGE ENGLISH**

**0500/01**

Paper 1 Reading Passage

October/November 2005

**1 hour 45 minutes**

Additional Materials: Answer Booklet/Paper

**READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST**

If you have been given an Answer Booklet, follow the instructions on the front cover of the Booklet.  
Write your Centre number, candidate number and name on all the work you hand in.  
Write in dark blue or black pen on both sides of the paper.  
Do not use staples, paper clips, highlighters, glue or correction fluid.  
Dictionaries are **not** permitted.

Answer **all** questions.

At the end of the examination, fasten all your work securely together.

The number of marks is given in brackets [ ] at the end of each question or part question.

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



**Read the following passage carefully, and then answer all the questions.**

*The writer, Bill Bryson, has just arrived in the island of Capri off the coast of Italy. Before this he has visited other cities in Italy where his experiences have not always been very pleasant.*

Capri town was gorgeous, an infinitely charming little place of villas and tiny lemon groves and long views across the bay to Naples and Vesuvius. The heart of the town was a small square, the Piazza Umberto I, lined with cream-coloured buildings and filled with tables and wicker chairs from the cafes ranged around it. At one end, up some wide steps, stood an old church, dignified and white, and at the other was a terrace with an open view to the sea far below. 5

I cannot recall a more beguiling place for walking. The town consisted almost entirely of a complex network of white-walled lanes and passageways, many of them barely wider than your shoulders, and all of them interconnected in a wonderfully bewildering fashion, so that I would constantly find myself returning to a spot I had departed from in an opposing direction ten minutes before. Every few yards an iron gate would be set in the wall and through it I could glimpse a white cottage in a jungle of flowery shrubs and, usually, a quarry-tiled terrace overlooking the sea. Every few yards a cross-passageway would plunge off down the hillside or a set of steps would climb half-way to the clouds to a scattering of villas high above. 10

There were no roads at all, apart from the one leading from the harbour to the town and onward to Anacapri, on the far side of the island. Everywhere else had to be got to on foot, often an arduous trek. 15

Most of the shops lay beyond the church, up the steps from the central square, in yet another series of lanes and little squares of unutterable charm. They all had names like Gucci and Yves St Laurent, which suggested that the summertime visitors must be rich and insufferable, but mercifully most of the shops were still not open for the season, and there was no sign of the tourists who must make them prosper in the summer. 20

A few of the lanes were enclosed with the upper storeys of the houses completely covering the passageways. I followed one of these lanes as it wandered upward through the town and finally opened again to the sky in a neighbourhood where the villas began to grow larger and enjoy more spacious grounds. The path meandered and climbed, so much so that I grew breathless again and propelled myself onwards by pushing my hands against my knees, but the scenery and setting were so fabulous that I was dragged on, as if by magnets. Near the top of the hillside the path levelled out and ran through a grove of pine trees, heavy with the smell of rising sap. On one side of the path were grand villas – I couldn't imagine by what method they got the furniture there when people moved in or out – and on the other side was a giddy view of the island: white villas strewn across the hillsides, half buried in hibiscus and bougainvillea and a hundred other types of shrub. 25 30

It was nearly dusk. A couple of hundred yards further on the path rounded a bend through the trees and ended suddenly, breathtakingly, in a viewing platform hanging out over a precipice of rock – a little patio in the sky. It was a look-out built for the public, but I had the feeling that no one had been there for years, certainly no tourist. It was the sheerest stroke of luck that I had stumbled on it. I have never seen anything half as beautiful: on one side the town of Capri spilling down the hillside, on the other the twinkling lights of Anacapri and the houses gathered around it, and in front of me a sheer drop of – what? – 200 feet, 300 feet, to a sea of the lushest aquamarine blue washing against outcrops of jagged rock. The sea was so far below that the sound of breaking waves reached me as the faintest of whispers. A sliver of moon, brilliantly white, hung in a pale blue evening sky, a warm breeze teased my hair and everywhere there was the scent of lemon, honeysuckle and pine. 35 40

- 1 (a) From what we are told about the Piazza Umberto I in the first paragraph of the passage, give **three** reasons why people might enjoy a visit there. [3]
- (b) Give **one** reason why it was not easy to go from one place to another on Capri. [1]
- (c) Explain, using your own words, 'the upper storeys of the houses completely covering the passageways' (lines 22-23). [1]
- (d) Give **two** facts about the path mentioned in lines 25-26. [2]
- (e) Re-read the last two paragraphs of the passage, and then write a summary of what Bill Bryson saw as he climbed to the top of this path. (Write a paragraph of about 50-70 words.) [7]
- (f) Re-read lines 6-10. Explain, using your own words, **two** of the difficulties Bryson encountered as he walked through the lanes. [4]
- (g) State **two** things you learn about the visitors mentioned in paragraph 4, and explain, **in your own words**, what Bryson thinks about these visitors. [4]
- (h) Re-read the final paragraph (lines 33-43), and then choose **three** words or phrases the writer uses to describe what he saw, heard and felt when he stood on the viewing platform. For each of your answers explain why the experience was very special to him. [6]
- (i) In line 39 why do you think the writer puts '— what? —'? [2]

[Total for Question 1: 30]

- 2 Imagine you have just visited Capri. Your aunt and uncle, who are both fit and healthy, are thinking of going there for a holiday and have asked for your advice.

**Write a letter to them in which you give your opinion as to how suitable a destination it would be for them.**

Begin your letter 'Dear Aunt and Uncle' and include:

- what they might like about the island
- what they might not like there.

Base your ideas on what you have read in the passage, but do not copy from it.

You should write between 1 and 1½ sides, allowing for the size of your handwriting.

(Up to ten marks are available for the content of your answer, and up to ten marks for the quality of your writing.)

[Total for Question 2: 20]

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