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UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS
International General Certificate of Secondary Education

FIRST LANGUAGE ENGLISH **0500/02**

Paper 2 Reading Passages (Extended) **October/November 2008**

2 hours

Additional Materials: Answer Booklet/Paper

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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.
Do not use staples, paper clips, highlighters, glue or correction fluid.

Answer **all** questions.
Dictionaries are **not** permitted.

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 **5** printed pages and **3** blank pages.

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Part 1

Read **Passage A** carefully, and then answer **Questions 1** and **2**.

Passage A

This is an account of the disastrous eruption of the volcano Vesuvius, and what happened at that time to an eighteen-year-old student and his uncle.

Vesuvius

Across the Bay of Naples in Italy, the volcano Mount Vesuvius dominates your view from almost every angle. It stands like a sentinel over the cluster of towns that huddle in its fertile foothills. Behind sheets of mist it is ghostlike; in the warm sunshine it is magnificent, but it always seems to brood secretively over the surrounding land and sea, full of silent menace.

The disastrous eruption in the year 79 was one of the world's most famous natural catastrophes. Then, of course, there were no rescue teams, no earth-moving apparatus and no emergency hospitals. Those people who could escape did so, and attributed the explosion to the gods and to the giants who had recently been seen ranging over the mountains. Anyway, there could have been no rescue, since the city of Pompeii was covered with 29 metres of small pumice stones and volcanic ash. Anyone who stayed behind or who revisited the site in the next day or two was either smothered or killed by a cloud of poisonous gases and dust. It was estimated that 20,000 died there.

Another victim of the explosion was the smaller seaside town of Herculaneum. Unlike Pompeii, this was buried in a mudslide, which then solidified, preserving a good deal of the town. 1,600 years later, both towns were discovered and painstakingly excavated, revealing houses with their roofs on, decorated pavements, wall paintings, theatres and shops. Many bodies were found which had turned to statues as they died.

We are fortunate in having an account of the eruption of Vesuvius which was written by an eighteen-year-old student called Pliny. He observed what happened from a comparatively safe distance before he was forced to escape. His uncle, known as Pliny the Elder, was a famous academic who wrote an encyclopedia called *Natural History* and other books on subjects such as a history of all the wars between the Romans and the Germans (in twenty volumes) and the use of missiles while on horseback. However, he was also famous for his service to the state. He had experienced military service in Germany and had held administrative posts in Spain. He was, at that time, in charge of the Roman navy in the Bay of Naples. He therefore called for a boat so that he could find out more about the little-known science of volcanoes. He had barely set off when a neighbour found herself trapped at the water's edge. He realised the gravity of the situation, called for more boats and made it his priority to rescue the stranded citizens.

His nephew, the young Pliny, decided to stay in the house and finish the homework that Pliny the Elder had given him. From there he wrote about the eruption as follows: 'I cannot give a more exact description of the shape of the cloud than by comparing it to that of a pine tree, for it shot up to a great height in the form of a trunk which formed itself at the top into several branches. The cloud was at one moment white and at another moment spotted, as if it had carried up earth and cinders.'

Later, when the young Pliny realised he must escape, he described how the wheels of the carts could not hold steady on the piles of small stones. From where they were they could see 'the sea sucked back, as if it was driven by the convulsions of the earth. Behind us, a black and dreadful cloud burst out in gusts of fiery, snakelike vapour. Now and again, the cloud yawned open to reveal long, fantastic flames, like flashes of lightning, but much larger.' What a fearful experience for an eighteen-year-old!

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Meanwhile, Pliny's uncle had reached comparative safety further round the bay, with his friend Pomponius. He went to bed, exhausted. Pomponius reported that 'His breathing (as he was pretty fat) was heavy and sonorous, and was heard by those who attended him outside his bedroom door.' Later the next day, Pliny the Elder became unwell, drank copious amounts of water, and requested another rest. Soon after, he collapsed and died, whether from the weakness of his heart, or the results of inhaling toxic gas, nobody knew.

The young man must have missed his uncle, whom he admired for his never-ending quest for knowledge as much as for his executive powers. He had also lost his teacher. At least the younger Pliny survived the volcano and became a politician, serving his country well.

1 Imagine you are a reporter, writing from the area.

Write the newspaper report which would have appeared a week after the eruption of Vesuvius.

Use the following headline:

Tragic death of respected Naval Commander:
Eruption causes terror and destruction in Bay of Naples

Base your report on what you have read in Passage A.

Write your report in modern English. **Do not** use columns.

Write between 1½ and 2 sides, allowing for the size of your handwriting.

Up to 15 marks will be available for the content of your answer, and up to 5 marks for the quality of your writing.

[Total: 20]

2 Re-read the descriptions of:

(a) Vesuvius in paragraph 1;

(b) the clouds in paragraphs 5 and 6.

Selecting words and phrases from these paragraphs to support your answer, explain the effects the writer creates in using these descriptions.

[Total: 10]

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Part 2

Question 3 is based on both **Passage A** and **Passage B**.
Read **Passage B** and re-read **Passage A**.

Passage B

In this passage the writer describes a journey to the Kamchatka Peninsula, one of the most volcanically active regions on Earth.

Russia's Frozen Inferno

Late last summer I spent a month studying volcanic eruptions with an international team that included French explorers, a German photographer called Carsten Peter, and a Russian guide named Feodor Farberov.

Carsten has spent his life documenting volcanoes with a camera. The closer he gets to the volcano, the happier he is. Not so Feodor, a 39-year-old, stolid, muscular, bearded mountaineer. He was born in a village at the foot of Klyuchevskoy and grew up with the dangers and discomforts of volcano research. 'Volcanic ash covered everything,' he recalled. 'Our water, our air, even our food tasted of sulphur.' Having seen 'enough eruptions for a lifetime,' Feodor now likes his mountains cold, quiet and covered with snow for skiing.

Bezymianny, one of the dozen volcanoes that make up the peninsula's group, was thought to be dormant until 1955, when it suddenly began to shake and swell and spew. On March 30th 1956, it exploded, enveloping the area in a shroud of ash. Within two days the ash reached Alaska, and two days later it was detected over the British Isles. The explosion flattened trees 15 miles away. Like the eruption of Mount St. Helens, it started with a giant avalanche, then blew out sideways, leaving a huge horseshoe-shaped crater.

We hiked through soft ash, sinking knee-deep at times, climbed heaps of shattered rock, and scrambled in and out of rocky gorges. Through wind and whipping clouds we climbed to the crater's broken rim and looked over. The inner cliffs dropped hundreds of feet to a circular channel, ringing a new mountain rising from the ruins of the old – a huge dome of smoking rock with its summit towering over us. On the floor of the channel sprawled a field of ice and snow, blackened by cinders and split by crevasses that gaped white in the enveloping mists. As we clung to the sharp edge, the dome threw down showers of rock from its steep sides. When large boulders hit the ice below, they left white wounds in the dark surface.

Another of Kamchatka's volcanoes is Mutnovsky. It is a complex structure with multiple active craters. In March 2000, steam blasts rocked one of the craters, and, within it, a glacier began to collapse. A large section of the glacier vanished, and a green acidic lake appeared in the middle of the broken ice. This kind of activity indicates that Mutnovsky is heating up and signals the possibility of even greater eruptions.

We set out just after dawn to follow a river up into that crater. Our path led across slopes of wet, slippery ash, past narrow openings in the rocks belching steam. Scrambling across the glacier, its surface a mass of dirty ice and cinders, we skirted the lake and climbed to a narrow divide. Standing on ice, we felt the hot breath of volcanic gases. Around us rose the steep crater walls lined with red and yellow deposits of sulphur. Slabs of glacier peeled off and crashed into the sour, pea-green water.

Carsten was ecstatic. When he and one of the other explorers decided to crawl under the glacier into a dark ice cave formed by a river of warm water, I followed. Feodor just shook his head.

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We crab-walked under huge blocks of ice that had fallen around the entrance, then waded through shallow water to the edge of darkness. Pale light fell from crevasses in the roof, barely illuminating a world of grey: grey shadows, grey ice, grey ash, grey river. The inner walls were hung with icicles. The ice groaned above and around us – the internal workings of the glacier as it melted and moved. The hairs on my neck rose and, with them, dreadful imaginings. Not only could the tunnel implode at any moment but also the lake, held back by only a wall of ice, could drain in a flash. It looked as if part of the cave had collapsed a few weeks earlier. What if another eruption occurred while we were down there?

3 Summarise:

(a) the dangers and discomforts of exploring volcanic areas, as described in **Passage B**;

(b) what made the eruption of Vesuvius such a terrible event for the people in the area, as described in **Passage A**.

Use your own words as far as possible.

You should write about 1 side in total, allowing for the size of your handwriting.

Up to 15 marks will be available for the content of your answer, and up to 5 marks for the quality of your writing.

[Total: 20]

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