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ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

0510/12

Paper 1 Reading and Writing

February/March 2026

2 hours

You must answer on the question paper.

No additional materials are needed.

INSTRUCTIONS

- Answer **all** questions.
- Use a black or dark blue pen.
- Write your name, centre number and candidate number in the boxes at the top of the page.
- Write your answer to each question in the space provided.
- Do **not** use an erasable pen. Do **not** use correction fluid or tape.
- Do **not** write on any bar codes.
- Dictionaries are **not** allowed.

INFORMATION

- The total mark for this paper is 60.
- The number of marks for each question or part question is shown in brackets [].

This document has **16** pages. Any blank pages are indicated.

Exercise 1

Read the article written by a student called Samira Cadiz about her visit to a cave in Austria, and then answer the questions.

My trip to Eisriesenwelt Cave

by Samira Cadiz

One of the most incredible places I have ever visited is Eisriesenwelt Cave in Austria. The cave is in the mountains, about 1641 metres above sea level. When I first went there, I was astonished at the size of the cave – the entrance is 20 metres high, and although the total length of the cave is 42 kilometres, tourists are only allowed to visit the first kilometre. What makes it so special is that the walls in the first part of the cave are permanently covered in ice.

We had booked our tickets in advance – it's much easier and you just have to make sure you arrive within 30 minutes of the time on your ticket. When we reached the cave entrance, we joined the next tour group. These leave every few minutes, so we weren't waiting long. You can only visit the cave with a guide, and ours, who was called Katya, definitely made the visit worthwhile. There's no electricity in the cave, but we enjoyed the special atmosphere created by old-fashioned lamps that were handed to us before we went in. The light from them made everything much more magical than if we'd had bright torches.

There were about 20 people in our group. We were glad to be at the front as a few visitors at the back said they missed parts of Katya's talk. At least everyone was suitably dressed – we would have got very cold otherwise, especially the younger kids. Katya's talks about the ice were fascinating – I learned about the history of the cave, and how the ice stays frozen because of the cold wind that blows through. While this information was interesting, seeing the incredible ice structures was the highlight of my visit. The shapes made by the ice are really beautiful, but be warned – taking photos is strictly prohibited.

I'd read a bit about the wildlife in the cave before our visit. I knew, for example, that there'd been cave bears living there, although they've been extinct for a long time. Imagine how exciting it would've been to see one! I knew the tiny cave worms I'd read about living in the ice would be hard to see because of their size, but people say there are also bats flying around the larger spaces later in the day. I guess we were there at the wrong time sadly – that was something I wish I had experienced. Despite this slight disappointment, we had a fantastic time at Eisriesenwelt Cave, and I'd thoroughly recommend it if you're ever in the Austrian mountains!



Question 1

How long is Eisriesenwelt Cave?

..... [1]

Question 2

What is given to visitors to help them get a good experience during their trip?

..... [1]

Question 3

What problem did some people have on the trip?

..... [1]

Question 4

What was Samira's favourite part of the trip?

..... [1]

Question 5

Which type of animal was Samira hoping to see?

..... [1]

Question 6

What are the rules for visitors to Eisriesenwelt Cave?

Give **three** details.

.....
.....
..... [3]

[Total: 8]

**Exercise 2**

Read the article about four teenagers (**A–D**) who are describing what they like doing in their free time. Then answer **Question 7(a)–(i)**.

Leisure time**A Tao**

My favourite activity is reading. You're probably thinking 'Well, that's not very exciting!' That's what most people say. And to be honest, before I got into graphic novels, that's what I used to think. They're a bit like cartoons, I guess, but not the usual ones for kids. They're aimed more at teenagers, and are really popular with my age group. Or the ones that I like are, anyway. Sometimes I can be so absorbed in any story – sad, or funny, or exciting, I don't mind – that I lose all track of time! If I could, I'd reach for a book the minute I get home from school, but there are other things to do too unfortunately! My parents say they're sure I'll be a writer when I'm older – who knows? They might be right, but I'm not convinced that I have enough imagination.

B Daisy

There's been a chess club at my school for a couple of years, and I joined right from the start. I'm one of the best players in the area now, which I can't quite believe, especially when I think that I was a complete beginner not long ago! In fact, I've just won a big tournament, and I think achievements like that look good when you're applying to colleges and other places. You know, it shows what sort of person you are. A few people from my class are also in the chess club. They weren't keen at first, but I kept telling them about all the fun I was having until one by one, they decided to give it a try! I've heard people say that if you're good at chess, you're also good at maths. I wish that was true for me.

C Louie

I've been surfing for ages. I come from a surfing background, I guess – my uncle was a professional surfer and my mum is good at it too. It's funny but most of my friends are more into sailing. I've tried to persuade them to come with me when I go surfing – I've even said I'll give them lessons, but they're not interested! We're all pretty young, and have lots going on in our lives, so it's fair enough that people don't have time for everything. If you ask me what the best thing about surfing is, I'd say it's the feeling of riding a big wave without falling off my surfboard! I've also got lots of energy and after I've been surfing, I notice my ability to concentrate on what I'm doing in lessons improves. That's my excuse for going surfing every day! And I can't imagine ever stopping any time in the future, either.

D Carys

I started dance classes a few months ago. I know the sort of dance I do definitely isn't the first kind that most people think of. It's not all pointed shoes and fancy clothes! Instead, our teacher focuses on traditional dances from different countries, so for example, we've just been learning an Indian dance. I love it! The more complicated dances take longer to learn, of course, and that's a part of the challenge that I love. Actually, whatever dance we're doing – from slow ones to energetic ones – I always come out of the class feeling more positive about things, no matter how I went in. We've got a performance coming up in a few weeks' time – I'm hoping my friends will come and support me. I'm looking forward to them seeing what I can do!



For each statement, write the correct letter, A, B, C or D, on the line.

Question 7

Which person ...

- (a) describes how the activity helps with their schoolwork? [1]
- (b) admits that the activity they do is quite unusual? [1]
- (c) mentions changing their opinion of the activity? [1]
- (d) explains they successfully encouraged others to start the activity? [1]
- (e) admits they would like more time to do the activity? [1]
- (f) explains how the activity will help them in the future? [1]
- (g) mentions that people can be critical about the activity? [1]
- (h) explains how the activity helps improve their mood? [1]
- (i) suggests the reason why they started doing the activity? [1]

[Total: 9]

Exercise 3

Read the article about mangrove trees, and then complete the notes.

Mangrove trees

Mangrove trees commonly grow in tropical places near the sea, in areas where they have access to both soil and sea water. Large forests of mangrove trees are found in places such as South America, Africa and tropical southeast Asia. It is thought that there are at least 50 types of mangrove trees around the world, ranging in height from 2 to 10 metres. Mangrove trees are unusual in that they have developed over time to cope with the salty coastal conditions that would kill most plants.

Below the surface of the water, the trees have a thick network of roots which stretch down into the ground. These roots provide an excellent hiding place for many fish species as larger predators are unable to reach them. At the same time, the roots keep the trees secure as the tide goes in and out. Mangrove tree roots are also particularly effective at removing the salt in the water before it is taken up into the trees. The roots of healthy trees also remove pollution which helps to maintain the quality of the sea water. Above the water, the mangrove tree branches and leaves make perfect nesting areas for a wide range of birds.

As many mangrove trees grow next to the sea, they are increasingly affected by water levels. While mangrove trees can adapt to the daily rise and fall of the tides, the forests do require relatively stable levels of water for long-term survival. Rising sea levels are negatively impacting the health and distribution of the world's mangrove trees. This is of great concern as vast areas of mangrove forest are vital, because they take in carbon from the atmosphere in the same way that the Amazon rainforest does.

In many places, mangrove forests bring money through tourism, with visitors wanting to explore the unique habitat for themselves. On one hand, this provides employment for local people. On the other hand, large numbers of mangrove trees have been cut down to build visitor facilities. Another point is that for centuries, careful management allowed local people to use the wood for building without this having an impact on the overall number of trees. Nowadays, however, in some places mangrove trees are being removed too quickly. This means that there is no time within the natural growing cycle for these forests to recover.

Finally, some areas of the world sometimes experience severe tropical storms. In mangrove forests, the branches and leaves of the trees can reduce the strength of storm winds which helps to limit the damage in an affected area. When such storms occur, they are often accompanied by strong waves. Therefore, the fact that mangrove tree roots also decrease the power of the waves is another reason why we should do all we can to ensure the health of the world's mangrove forests.





Imagine you are going to give a talk about mangrove trees to your classmates.
Use words from the article to help you write some notes.

Make short notes under each heading.

Question 8

Why mangrove trees are important to the environment:

-
-
-
-
- [5]

Question 9

Threats facing mangrove trees:

-
- [2]

[Total: 7]



**Exercise 4**

Read the article by a student called Nathan Hobbs who worked at a summer camp, and then answer the questions.

Working at a summer camp

by Nathan Hobbs

When I was in my first year at university in the English city of Birmingham, I realised I needed to earn some money during the long summer holiday. I had a few options, like going back to the small town in southern England where I grew up and working at the local leisure centre there. My parents would've been happy, as they missed me, and were always asking about my plans for the holidays. Then someone on my course mentioned that she was applying to work at a summer camp in the USA, helping with activities and looking after the young teenagers who'd be spending a few weeks there. That idea sounded good, so I decided to apply, and I don't regret it for a moment.

I had an interview and was offered a place as a sports coach at a summer camp in the American state of Texas. Six weeks later, I flew out there! All the new staff members met the managers and were shown to the huts where we'd be living – they were basic, but clean. The staff came from all over the world, and I was looking forward to learning about other cultures. In no time at all I'd got into my new routine. It was as if I'd been there for weeks, which was a good thing as there was lots to remember.

Anyone who has worked at a summer camp will know about the different activities on offer. The kids do various sports and creative things; there's music and even ice-cream eating competitions! And they're all great, but the one that I know which won't be forgotten was when we picked a different group of kids each night and gave them a 'secret task' to do together. One task was to go really quietly to the little cupboard where we kept the sweets we used for prizes, and eat some for a night-time snack! Of course, this was all planned – although the kids didn't know that. They just thought they were having a great adventure – and breaking a little rule at the same time!

My job at the summer camp lasted for six weeks, and then I had some time to explore the country. I decided to visit various places by bus. The buses were pretty regular, so even if you were late for one, it wasn't a disaster as there were alternative routes to take. It could've been quite tricky trying to work out where to catch the bus I needed. It wasn't always from a bus station, so I had to find the right place on the street, but there were always people to ask. And everyone was helpful, especially the person who contacted the bus driver after I'd got off without my rucksack, which contained my ID card. Luckily, the bus company sent it on the next bus – what a great service!

I was only planning on one summer at the camp. After all, I had the rest of my university course to get through, and I needed to start thinking seriously about future careers. But I ended up going back for two more summers! It's certainly true that working at a summer camp will earn you a good salary. It's also given me the chance to see a lot of new places. If I'm honest though, the experience of getting to know the people I worked with on that first trip was so fantastic that I had to reapply. The opportunity to have that fun again was too good to miss.



For each question, choose the correct answer, A, B or C, and put a tick (✓) in the appropriate box.

Question 10

In the first paragraph, Nathan is

A commenting on the pressure to find a job.

☐

B explaining where an idea came from.

☐

C describing the benefits of working abroad.

☐

[1]

Question 11

When Nathan arrived at the camp, he was

A pleased with how quickly he understood what to do.

☐

B surprised at the range of nationalities among the employees.

☐

C impressed with the standard of the staff accommodation.

☐

[1]

Question 12

Nathan included a story about a 'secret task' to show how staff

A ignored some of the camp rules.

☐

B created good memories for campers.

☐

C tried to encourage positive teamwork.

☐

[1]

Question 13

What problem did Nathan have while travelling around the USA?

A He got lost in a city.

☐

B He missed a transport connection.

☐

C He left a document behind.

☐

[1]

Question 14

Nathan's main reason for returning to the USA was to

A gain more work experience.

☐

B explore more of the country.

☐

C form more new friendships.

☐

[1]

Question 15

Nathan wrote this article to give

A an account of a worthwhile opportunity.

☐

B a realistic view of working at a summer camp.

☐

C a reason why the USA is the best place for such a job.

☐

[1]

[Total: 6]

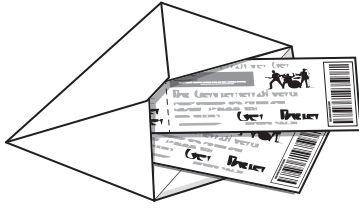




Turn over

Exercise 5

Question 16



You recently won tickets to go to a concert next month to see your favourite singer. However, you have a problem because your family wants you to attend a family celebration on the same day.

Write an email to a friend about your problem.

In your email you should:

- describe what you did to win the concert tickets
- say why you like this singer so much
- explain what you are going to do about your problem.

Write about 120 to 160 words.

You will receive up to 6 marks for the content of your email and up to 9 marks for the language used.





[15]

[Total: 15]

**Exercise 6****Question 17**

Your class has recently been discussing fashion and the clothes people like to wear. Your teacher has asked you to write an article about fashion and the clothes people wear.

Here are some comments:

It's good to look smart.

Everyone looks the same!

I like my clothes to
be comfortable.

Fashionable clothes are very expensive.

Now write an article for your teacher, giving your views.

The comments may give you some ideas, and you should also use some ideas of your own.

Write about 120 to 160 words.

You will receive up to 6 marks for the content of your article and up to 9 marks for the language used.





[15]

[Total: 15]





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