



Cambridge O Level

CANDIDATE
NAME

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CENTRE
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ENGLISH LANGUAGE

1123/12

Paper 1 Reading

May/June 2025

2 hours

You must answer on the question paper.

You will need: Insert (enclosed)

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 or correction fluid.
- Do **not** write on any bar codes.
- Dictionaries are not allowed.

INFORMATION

- The total mark for this paper is 50.
- The number of marks for each question or part question is shown in brackets [].
- The insert contains the reading passages.

This document has **8** pages. Any blank pages are indicated.



Read **Text A**, *The elephant and the boy*, in the insert and answer **Question 1** and **Question 2**.

Question 1

- (a) In paragraph 1, what was the first physical feature people noticed when they met Jahan?

.....
 [1]

- (b) In paragraph 2, how did Jahan feel about Istanbul when he first saw it? Give **two** details from the text to support your answer.

Jahan's feeling
 details

 [3]

- (c) Explain why Jahan 'hurried back below deck.' (line 15)

.....
 [1]

- (d) From paragraph 5, identify **two** details about the elephant's physical health that showed that he was unwell.

-
- [2]

- (e) From paragraph 5, give **two** reasons why Jahan thought the elephant's life would be better at the palace.

-
- [2]





(f) In paragraph 6, the sailors found it difficult to get the elephant out of the ship.

(i) What was the first problem the sailors had?

.....
..... [1]

(ii) How did the sailors solve this problem?

.....
..... [1]

(g) **Using your own words**, explain what the text means by 'ultimately managing'. (line 34)

.....
..... [2]

(h) Explain **using your own words** Jahan's different feelings about the elephant.

Give **three** details from anywhere in the text to support your answer.

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

[Total: 16]





Question 2

- (a) Read this sentence from the text:

'They reached the Palace Gate under the stern gaze of the guards who showed no interest in elephants or boys who would become famous one day.' (lines 37–38)

What does the writer want to suggest to us about what happens to Jahan later in life?

.....
 [1]

- (b) Explain why the writer uses the word 'mammoth' rather than 'large' in the phrase 'a mammoth door with iron studs'. (line 39)

.....
 [1]

- (c) Read this sentence from the text:

'They were taken to a barn with an earthen floor and lofty ceiling – Chota's new airy home.' (line 42)

What effect does the writer suggest about the barn by using the phrase 'airy home' to describe it?

.....
 [2]

- (d) Read this sentence from the text:

'Inside was a sullen fellow of an age that was impossible to determine who glared at Jahan, clearly blaming him for the animal's condition.' (lines 43–44)

What **two** impressions of Taras does the writer want to convey to the reader in this sentence?

.....

 [2]





- (e) Identify **one example** from the text below of how the writer uses language effectively to convey how the elephant is healed by Taras:

‘Taras examined Chota’s mouth, eyes and trunk. Jahan lowered his gaze, uncomfortably aware that Chota was on the brink of collapse. Taras had magical fingers that healed animals, though were of no use when it came to human diseases. Deftly, gingerly, he applied a foul-smelling lotion to Chota’s trunk, wrapping it with sacking full of crushed leaves and fragrant oil. Not knowing how else to help, the boy brought the bucket of fresh clear water as instructed, placing it next to piles of apples, cabbages and hay – a banquet.’ (lines 44–50)

Explain the impression the writer creates in the example you have identified.

example

explanation

.....

.....

.....

[3]

[Total: 9]



(a) Summarise the arguments against the plans for the zoo, according to Text B.

You must **use continuous writing** (not note form).

Use your own words as far as possible.

Avoid copying long sections of the text.

Your summary should be no more than 150 words.

Up to 10 marks are available for the content of your answer and up to 10 marks for the quality of your writing.

This image shows a full page of white paper designed for handwriting practice. It features 20 evenly spaced, horizontal dashed lines that run across the entire width of the page. The lines are thin and black, providing a guide for letter height and placement. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the page.



[20]

You are taking part in a television programme about 'Project Planet'.

Give your answer to the interviewer's question, using information from the text.

Interviewer's question: Our audience may be surprised to hear that you've worked closely with the zoo on 'Project Planet'. Many people are against this project.

What is your opinion and why?

Lucy Graves' answer:

[5]

[Total: 25]



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