



Cambridge International AS Level

ENGLISH GENERAL PAPER

8021/21

Paper 2 Comprehension

October/November 2024

INSERT

1 hour 45 minutes

INFORMATION

- This insert contains all the resources referred to in the questions.
- You may annotate this insert and use the blank spaces for planning. **Do not write your answers** on the insert.

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

Material for Section A

Background

FunToiZ is a toy manufacturer located in the country of Monorio. Mrs Mattieu, Managing Director of FunToiZ, tasked the design team to create a new toy for 2- to 4-year-olds (toddlers) as she thought the company had started to be outperformed by its competitors in this particular age range.

Profiles of the design team

Sophie (22), Junior Designer

She has just joined FunToiZ, straight from an elite international art and design college. She specialised in graphic design, winning a prestigious prize for her innovative and stylish packaging in her final year.

Arno (55), Senior Designer

He has been working at FunToiZ for 20 years. He was employed by the previous managing director for his superb technological know-how and extensive engineering knowledge, gained whilst working in the automotive industry.

Nils (36), Design Director

He used to work for a major competitor, but he has been at FunToiZ for five years now. He studied product design at a local university, then obtained a post-graduate degree in design and branding strategy.

Sophie and Arno emailed descriptions of their ideas for a new toy to Nils ahead of a design team meeting.

Sophie's toy

The Clever Chair will encourage a toddler to sit still and learn because, as they sit down, the hidden pressure pads activate songs. They will be able to press buttons in the arms of the chair to hear various things: the alphabet, numbers, colours, shapes, amongst others. They will be able to lift the seat lid to find what has been hidden inside. Various packs of fun surprises will be made available to buy to hide inside. There will be five levels, so parents/carers will be able to choose the appropriate level for their toddlers' stage of cognitive (brain) development by sliding the switch on the back of the chair. The chair will promote the idea of cause and effect when toddlers press the buttons or lift the seat lid, improve their gross motor skills* and encourage conversations about the fun surprises.

Arno's toy

The Dual-Purpose Racing Car will be an inflatable car that can be a paddling pool outdoors and a soft ball pit indoors. Outdoors, the steering wheel will allow toddlers to pretend they are racing round their garden like a Formula 1 racing driver as it will be produced in similar colours to the famous race teams. Its roof will provide shade so toddlers will be protected from the sun and the water will stay refreshingly cool. Indoors, with the addition of soft play balls it can be used dry as a ball pit. Both uses of the car will encourage toddlers to be more active so will strengthen their physical development and promote confidence when in water.

Extract from the design team meeting, with Mrs Mattieu in attendance

Nils: *(stifling a yawn)* Thanks for coming up with these ideas so quickly. Just glanced at both descriptions. I'd like you to talk me through your designs now.

Arno: *(with assurance)* I thought we'd need something simple for this age range. That's why it's a very straightforward production job. We're so used to manufacturing such items, you know, that we could even make them with our eyes closed! Thought this car would be perfect.

Sophie: *(sounding unconvinced)* Mmm, I thought about creating something innovative that would grab the attention of customers looking along the shelves. I spent a lot of time thinking about the kind of things children love. Noise, surprises, pressing things, lifting things up for a reveal. This is a winner.

Arno: What about you, boss? What's your idea for something new?

Nils: Er ...

Additional Information

1. FunToiZ's new finance director has just told Mrs Mattieu that sales across their whole range of toys are falling.
2. In cognitive ability tests, school students in Monorio scored 20% lower, on average, than school students in other countries.
3. When toddlers were given a prototype of each toy to play with, their reactions were noted:
 - The Clever Chair: 'Again, Mummy, again!' and 'Dad, sing with me!'
 - The Dual-Purpose Racing Car: 'What that?', pointing at the chair, and 'I want chair, Mummy.'
4. A minority of Monorio's inhabitants can swim.
5. An international study recommends 14 hours of physical activity every week for children and 7 hours every week for adults.
6. Nils has had a few vague thoughts about his design for a new toy.
7. Before going to college, Sophie worked as a nanny** to three preschool children, drawing on her own experience as the oldest in a family of five.
8. FunToiZ employs Ms Shiffrin, a specialist in child psychology and mental development, as a consultant.
9. At certain times of the year, there are strong off-shore currents around Monorio's coastline.
10. Recently, the behaviour of some children in Monorio's nurseries and first schools has made teachers increasingly concerned about discipline.
11. One in four inhabitants of Monorio has their own garden.
12. Mr Bruin, Monorio's Minister of Education, has commissioned a series of television programmes showing parents how to play a more effective role in their children's education.
13. Mrs Mattieu and Ms Shiffrin have been close friends since meeting at university.
14. In Monorio, on average, young children exercise for one hour every day, while teenagers exercise for only 30 minutes every day.
15. Monorio's climate is becoming hotter, with temperatures sometimes reaching 45 °C during its summer.
16. Two weeks ago, Nils became the proud father of a baby daughter.
17. FunToiZ is the only toy manufacturer in Monorio not to win the country's Prize for Innovation in Industry.
18. Mrs Calvi, Monorio's Minister of Health, has urged healthcare professionals to underline the importance of exercise for overall well-being as the percentage of overweight people is increasing.

*involving movements of the large muscles of the arms, legs and body

**a person whose job is to take care of a particular family's children

Material for Section B

Extract from an article about master perfumers by Scott Sayare

Gary Marr entered the perfume trade without the customary sense of romance. In the 1970s, he was playing bass guitar in a band when, in need of some money, he took a job mixing chemicals. He had never heard of a 'nez*', but he had a knack for remembering chemicals by their odours, and his employer, a fragrance company, offered to train him to make scents of his own.

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Marr is a master perfumer at Firmenich, a Swiss company that is one of the fragrance industry's 'big four' firms. Fine fragrance is the most prestigious work these companies do – they create most of the perfumes sold by designer brands – but they do plenty besides. Marr makes scents for the everyday side of the business, a vast and, in many ways, more demanding assignment. 'I have always said that fine fragrances are relatively easy,' said Marr. 'It is all about making nice, harmonious, round fragrances. Whereas you come to home care or body care – the fragrances have to perform.' Dishwashing scents must 'bloom**' when they hit water, but also slide off immediately so your tableware does not leave your food smelling of perfume; bleach can be made to smell nice, but it also tends to destroy everything it touches.

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Perfume is far more present in our lives than is often acknowledged. The substances we use to clean our homes and our bodies are perfumed, as are plant fertilisers and, it is widely speculated, the electronics manufactured by Apple. Airlines, shops and hotels perfume their air, as do cinemas with the artificial scent of popcorn. The fragrance and flavour industry brings in an estimated \$30 billion each year. Firmenich claims that its products reach more than half the world's population every day.

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It is a common misconception, in Marr's view, that one must have a refined nose to be a perfumer. Sensitivity comes with training. (Early on, he noticed the sharpening of his sense of smell on the motorway. He found he could tell, with his windows closed, whether a driver ahead of him was smoking, even if the driver's windows were closed too.) Most critical is that a perfumer's sense of smell be normal: she must smell what her clients smell. No two noses are exactly alike: for example, some people find that coriander smells of soap. Despite his democratic nose, Marr does not necessarily enjoy the same scents as his clients, and he is occasionally obliged to design products he hates. He finds one of his air-freshener scents, an artificial raspberry aroma, offensive to the point of pain: 'It actually hurts my nose,' he told me.

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Responses to odour vary by person and by culture. Europeans are largely indifferent to maple syrup and repelled by Concord grapes and root beer, all of which North Americans tend to love. Familiarity is a strong predictor of approval. Southern Europeans like the smell of lavender in their laundry products; Americans like laundry products that are advertised as lavender but smell like vanilla.

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Recently, I visited Marr at Firmenich's laboratories in New Jersey. Amongst the buildings is a factory manufacturing all sorts of fragrances, and I was met in the car park by a cloud of scent. It reminded me initially of pine freshener but then seemed to morph into something sweet and rich, perhaps related to strawberry bubble gum. By the time I had reached the entrance, the smell reminded me of a candle shop at Christmas.

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Companies are constantly adjusting the perfumes in their products. When a company discovers that a competitor's scent is out-testing one of their own, they turn to the fragrance houses. They are engaged in a permanent, low-grade perfumery war. Among the many

fragrances Marr was working on when I visited was one I will call Magus, intended for a popular detergent, whose scent was made by a competitor. That scent is, by broad consensus, exceptional. 'It's such a good fragrance,' Marr told me, longingly. A contract for such a fragrance could be worth tens of millions of dollars. Marr's new fragrance was already the result of years of work, and had been inspired by a scent he had come across a decade earlier. 45 50

Firmenich's laundry-testing laboratory resembled an immaculate laundromat, with washing machines droning along white walls. Marr and Miriam Coria, a colleague, stood at a countertop as she handed him a series of plastic boxes, each containing white hand towels laundered with a different version of Magus. Marr brought the towels gently to his nostrils. Coria buried her nose in them. One scent was 'more sensorial***', Marr said, another 'more functional'. To me, the towels smelt like nothing. They moved on to damp cloth, the critical stage for detergents, where scents 'bloom'. Marr liked the version Magus 61, finding it full-bodied; Coria preferred Magus 60 for its spice. Marr thought it might be possible to get both effects. On his computer, he pulled up the formula for Magus 61 and began making adjustments in a new column titled Magus 610. 55 60

A week later, Marr and Coria were testing Magus 610 alongside other versions. 'One here I like a lot,' said Marr. Coria pointed to a box of towels washed in Magus 610: 'That's the one you like? I love it too! I could use it every day on everything.' Marr turned to me. 'I know when I smell a good fragrance,' he said. 'You just instantly know. It probably happens once every two years.' 65

*a person whose profession is to create perfume ('nose' in French)

**a build-up in fragrance intensity in use when you add water to a product or when it comes into contact with moisture such as sweat

***relating to sensation or the senses

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