



Cambridge International AS & A Level

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

9093/11

Paper 1 Reading

October/November 2024

2 hours 15 minutes

You must answer on the enclosed answer booklet.

You will need: Answer booklet (enclosed)

INSTRUCTIONS

- Answer **all** questions.
- Follow the instructions on the front cover of the answer booklet. If you need additional answer paper, ask the invigilator for a continuation booklet.
- 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 [].

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



Section A: Directed response

Question 1

Read the following text, which is an extract from a newspaper article published in 2022.

- (a) You decide to write an email to the editor, giving reasons why the benefits of tourism outweigh the disadvantages. Write the text for your email. Use 150–200 words. [10]
- (b) Compare your email with the article, analysing form, structure and language. [15]

The big idea: is tourism bad for us?

Wanderlust may be surging once more – but will travel really help us find what we're looking for?

In 2019, the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) reported that international travel had increased to a record 1.4 billion tourist arrivals. It predicted a 3% to 4% annual increase in coming years. That didn't happen, of course. At the end of 2021, international tourist arrivals were 72% below 2019 levels with 1 billion fewer arrivals than two years earlier.

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But the value of tourism depends on how you do it. Cruise ships generate 21 000 gallons of sewage per day per vessel, much of it ending up in the sea. In 2019, transport-related emissions from tourism were responsible for 5% of human-made global carbon dioxide emissions, according to UNWTO.

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The planet-despoiling propensities of tourism were poignantly captured in the *New York Times* list of 52 Places to Visit in 2020. One of them, Louisiana's Grand Isle, faces one of the world's highest rates of relative sea level rise. 'Does a place appear more hauntingly beautiful when you know it's disappearing?' asked the *New York Times* writer, seemingly unaware that encouraging tourism to the seven-mile-long barrier island might hasten its vanishing into the Gulf of Mexico. Another entry suggested that 'with that mile-thick ice sheet melting fast, and two new international airports slated to open in 2023, the time to explore an untrammelled, intact Greenland is now'.

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True, sustainable tourism is a growing phenomenon but, arguably, it heals the planet only in the way putting a plaster over a gunshot wound does. Ecotourism in 2019 represented just over 2% of the whole sector: the former was valued at \$181.1 billion, while in the same year tourism as a whole was worth nearly \$9 trillion, according to the World Travel & Tourism Council.

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Furthermore, there are discrepancies between what tourists say and what they do. According to a recent survey by Elegant Resorts, 99% of the luxury operator's customers said sustainable travel was important to them. But the company also noted that there had been a huge increase in inquiries about private jets, perhaps prompted by grisly airport and in-flight experiences.

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Less well established is what tourism risks doing, not to balances of payments and the planet, but to our souls. Today, in our global village, tourism is not what it was. Food from around the world can be brought to your door, and you can engage in all kinds of cultural appropriation and virtual tourism without leaving the comfort of your home.

Microsoft's slogan, 'Where do you want to go today?', typifies how practically all human activity takes place in a hyperculture in which the world has been reduced to goods in a supermarket of experiences, all readily consumable and disposable. In that context, tourism risks not so much broadening the mind as narrowing it. 35

This, at least, is the suggestion of a newly translated book called *Hyperculture*. In it, the Korean-German philosopher Byung-Chul Han argues there is no longer any real difference between indigenous and foreign, near and far. Travel used to uproot us valuably from our own soil and confront us with the other. Consider what made pilgrims put on their travelling shoes. 'He or she is not completely at home Here, and so goes to a special There,' he writes. The first tourists, Han suggests, were similar to pilgrims in that they were seeking the mind-expanding shock of the new. 40 45

Tourism is attractive because it underwrites a desire that, when we go overseas, stuff doesn't get too strange, risky or foreign. Increasingly, we travel not to decentre our world views or challenge our sensibilities, but to chillax and populate our Instagrams.

Section B: Text analysis

Question 2

Read the following text, which is an extract from a review of Maria Gainza's novel *Portrait of an Unknown Lady*. The review was published in an online newspaper in 2022.

Analyse the text, focusing on form, structure and language.

[25]

***Portrait of an Unknown Lady* by Maria Gainza review – Bolaño¹-esque art mystery**

The Argentinian writer follows up her thrilling debut, Optic Nerve, with a truth-twisting tale of forgery

One of my favourite books of the past few years was a debut novel by an Argentinian art critic that didn't get nearly enough attention when it was published in translation in 2019. *Optic Nerve* by Maria Gainza is a digressive, virtually plotless account of a woman surveying her life through the paintings that enthrall her. I found it so fresh, so piercingly beautiful, I felt like I'd had a door kicked open in my mind, as Bruce Springsteen said of hearing Bob Dylan for the first time.

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Portrait of an Unknown Lady, translated by Thomas Bunstead, is a seemingly more conventional novel about a high society con artist in 1960s Argentina. But like *Optic Nerve*, it's a layered narrative told through impressionistic vignettes by a narrator who is attracted to the sadness and strangeness of others.

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From a hotel room overlooking the Recoleta Cemetery in Buenos Aires, our unnamed narrator, a 'fairly prestigious' Argentinian art critic, recalls how she was drawn into a world of art counterfeiting. It all began in her mid-20s, when she was appointed assistant to Enriqueta Macedo, the country's leading authority in fine art authentication. The narrator becomes utterly devoted to the older woman – who eventually lets her in on her dirty secret. For the past 40 years, she has been giving certificates of authenticity to fake works of art.

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Many of these works are by the master forger Renée, a charismatic woman whom Enriqueta met at the Argentinian Fine Arts Academy and who has recently vanished. Back in 'the golden age of art forgery', the two women collaborated with a group of fellow art graduates and 'tatty bohemians' in a run-down mansion, known as the Hotel Melancólico. They specialised in forging the Austrian-Argentine artist Mariette Lydis, known for her kitsch² paintings of 'murderous little girls' and 'women about to turn into animals or animals not long since made human'. Enriqueta admits that though she enjoyed cheating the rich, she wasn't in it for the money. The thrill came from the idea that Renée's fakes were raising the bar for art. 'Can a forgery not give as much pleasure as an original?' she asks.

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After Enriqueta dies, the narrator finds herself writing the auction catalogue for a suspiciously sudden discovery of 'Lydis-related' objects – a pearl necklace, a dried birch branch – which collectively tell the story of the painter's journey from Nazi-occupied Vienna to Argentina. Gainza's novel becomes a puzzle as we question the most improbable biographical details. How much has been fabricated by the narrator? Does authenticity really matter? And exactly whose life story is she really interested in: artist, forger or authenticator?

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The narrator's quest might be futile but it provides a way for her to keep an imaginary conversation going with her deceased mentor. And in the process, Gainza weaves a fascinating, often confounding story about beauty, obsession and authenticity. At one point, she agrees with Oscar Wilde that insincerity isn't really so terrible a thing. 'It is merely a method by which we can multiply our personalities. Perhaps all our sadness can be attributed to living trapped within ourselves. Perhaps it's only the counterfeiter who finds a way past this obstacle.'

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I confess that I didn't find *Portrait of an Unknown Lady* as enthralling as *Optic Nerve*, not helped by a few awkwardnesses in the translation. But this is still a novel with many beautiful, confounding moments. Maria Gainza is sharp, modern and playful, a writer who multiplies the possibilities for fiction.

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¹*Bolaño*: Roberto Bolaño Ávalos, a Chilean novelist

²*kitsch*: in poor taste, but appreciated as ironic

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