

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS  
International General Certificate of Secondary Education

**FIRST LANGUAGE ENGLISH**

**0500/02**

Paper 2 Reading Passages

May/June 2006

**2 hours**

Additional Materials: Answer Booklet/Paper

**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.

**Part 1**

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

**Passage A**

*This story was written a long time ago. It is about a hotel in the state of Victoria, Australia.*

**The Shamrock Hotel**

Not a day's tramp from Ballarat, set well back from a dusty track that started nowhere in particular and had no destination worth mentioning, stood the Shamrock Hotel. It was a low, rambling, disjointed structure, and bore strong evidence of having been designed by an amateur artist in a moment of drunken frenzy. It reached out in several well-defined angles, and had a lean-to building stuck on here and there; numerous outhouses were dropped down about it at random; its walls were propped up in places with logs, and its moss-coloured shingle roof, bowed down with the weight of years and a great accumulation of stones, hoop-iron, jam-tins, broken glassware, and dried possum skins, bulged threateningly on the verge of utter collapse. The Shamrock was built of sun-dried bricks, of an unhealthy, bilious tint. Its dirty, shattered windows were plugged in places with old hats and discarded female apparel, and draped with green blinds, many of which had broken their moorings, and hung despondently by one corner. Groups of ungainly fowl chased succulent grasshoppers before the bar door; a moody, distempered goat rubbed her ribs against a shattered trough roughly hewn from the butt of a tree, and a matronly old bitch of spare proportions wallowed complacently in the dust of the road, surrounded by her yelping brood.

A battered sign hung out over the door of the Shamrock, informing people that Michael Doyle was the licensed owner, and that good accommodation could be afforded to both man and beast at the lowest current rates. But that sign was unreliable. Bed and board were quite out of the province of the Shamrock. There was, in fact, only one couch professedly at the disposal of the weary wayfarer, and this, according to the statement of the few persons who had ever ventured to try it, seemed stuffed with old boots and stubble; it was located immediately beneath a hen-roost, which was the resting place of a maternal fowl, addicted on occasion to nursing her chickens on the tired sleeper's chest. The turnover at the Shamrock was not at all extensive for, saving the occasional agricultural labourer who came from 'beyond' – which was the versatile host's way of designating any part within a radius of five miles – to revel in an occasional spree, the trade was confined to the passing cockatoo farmer, who invariably arrived on a bony, drooping horse, took a drink, and shuffled away amid clouds of dust.

Landlord Doyle was of Irish extraction; his stock was so old that everyone had forgotten where and when it originated; but Mickey assumed no unnecessary style, and his personal appearance would not have led you to infer that there had been a king in his family, and that an ancestor of his had once killed a landlord. Micky was a small, scraggy man, with a mop of grizzled hair and a little, red, humorous face, ever bristling with auburn stubble. His trousers were the most striking thing about him; they were built on the premises, and always contained enough stuff to make him a full suit and a winter overcoat. Mrs Doyle manufactured those pants after plans and specifications of her own designing, and was mighty proud when Michael would yank them up into his armpits, and amble around, peering about discontentedly over the waistband. 'They were a great saving in waistcoats,' she said.

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- 1 You have recently stayed at the Shamrock Hotel and, most surprisingly, you thoroughly enjoyed your stay.

Write a letter to Mr and Mrs Doyle explaining the reasons why you liked the hotel so much. You know that the Doyles will use your letter to advertise the hotel in future.

Base all that you write on Passage A.

You should write between 1 ½ and 2 sides, allowing for the size of your handwriting.

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

**[20 marks]**

- 2 Re-read the descriptions of

(a) the animals you might find at the Shamrock, in paragraph 1

(b) Michael Doyle, in paragraph 3.

By referring closely to the language used by the writer, explain how he makes these descriptions effective.

**[10 marks]**

## Part 2

Read **Passage B** carefully, and then answer **Question 3**, which is based on both **Passage A** and **Passage B**.

**Passage B****The Technocrat Hotel**

Mr Rapadi was a much-travelled man, a great critic of the hotels he visited around the world. 'In the end,' he would say, 'they are all much like each other.' He dreamed of creating a hotel which would outshine all others in its modernity, would cause all who saw it to gasp and would attract the famous and the successful. He would call it *The Technocrat*.

Eventually he built his hotel and it so happened that I was one of his first clients. There was no mistaking it. It towered menacingly above the surrounding buildings, resplendent in glass and shining metal. Everything about it was vast, its windows, its entrance and the magnificent red letters that spelled out *Technocrat*.

I was humbled by this edifice. If I entered, I would be sure to be lost. But I was attracted like a magnet and, as I approached, the doors slid noiselessly apart as if, mysteriously, they expected me. I entered what appeared to be a bronze cavern with coloured lights twinkling from a great height and some considerable way ahead lay the reception desk.

No one stood behind the desk to make me feel welcome. However, a courteous recorded voice, perhaps that of Mr Rapadi himself, wished me a very good afternoon and requested my name and my credit card which a little machine graciously read and returned to me. 'Your room is on thirty-fifth floor,' said the mechanical voice. 'Please take identity disk from machine on right. Lifts on left side.'

There was a veritable bank of lifts — not the two or three you usually encounter in inferior hotels but a whole line of them with glass doors, shooting up and down. I stood nervously watching them as feet and heads came suddenly in and out of view. I never saw anybody get in or out.

As I entered my lift, it recognised my identity disk and whisked me disconcertingly to the thirty-fifth floor before I had time to press a button. I arrived before I had begun, so to speak, and stepped onto a metal moving carpet which delivered me to my room.

The door slid open automatically and I stepped into a technological wonderland. How did the subdued lighting know my favourite colour? How could the TV set scan 150 channels to locate my type of culture? Email and internet devices burst out at every corner and the bed, ah, the bed was capable of assuming all angles and of adapting to the size of its most awkward customer.

To be truthful, I did not know where to turn. My stomach was still at reception and the little voices of gadgets introducing themselves electronically to me set my brain in a whirl. The food delivery system was too assertive, bullying me to listen to the menu and to make my choice. 'Vegetable sausage,' I gasped to keep the thing quiet. 'How many times?' it demanded. 'Once only,' I said and was rewarded by a piping hot plateful that I did not really want but was too afraid to decline.

This cacophony of voices was insistent, destructive. It seemed that they were too scarily human and that a riot might soon break out. I was too frightened to approach the bathroom, for what contraption might leap out at me? What if the water sprinklers detected my rising blood pressure and soaked the entire room?

As I stood near the window, a bottled voice said, 'Fresh air, sir?' and indeed I was met by a rush of artificial wind that nearly knocked me off my feet.

Then it struck me. In all the time I had been in Mr Rapadi's hotel, I had not met a single one, apart from those strange bodies that went up and down in the glass-fronted lifts.

As I left the room, the door shuddered, the moving carpet shrieked and I almost fell into the crossed the lobby furtively and a voice rang out, 'Your check, sir; your identity disk, sir?' and escaped only just in time through the closing doors.

I spent that night in a comfortable family hotel up the road. A few weeks later I read that the *Technocrat* had exploded mysteriously in the middle of the night, a victim perhaps of its own success.

**3** Read **Passage B** and re-read **Passage A**.

Summarise:

- (a) the appearance and the facilities of the Technocrat Hotel that the writer appeared to find worrying or annoying;
- (b) the appearance and facilities, or the lack of them, of the Shamrock Hotel that a visitor might find worrying or annoying.

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

Up to fifteen marks will be given for the content of your answer, and up to five marks for the quality of your writing.

**[20 marks]**





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*Copyright Acknowledgements:*

Passage A                      *A Golden Shanty* by Edward Dyson. From an anthology published by Longman Australia Pty Ltd, 1995

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