

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS  
General Certificate of Education  
Advanced Subsidiary Level and Advanced Level

**ENGLISH LANGUAGE**

**8693/01**

Paper 1 Passages for Comment

October/November 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 **two** questions.  
You are reminded of the need for good English and clear presentation in your answers.  
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.

## Answer two questions.

- 1 The passage below introduces a character called Loretta. She is in love – but not necessarily anyone else.
- (a) Comment on the style and language of the passage. [15]
- (b) Loretta's friend, Rita, keeps a diary. In it, she records her impressions of Loretta. Basing your answer closely on the material of the passage, write her diary entry (between 120 and 150 words). [10]

One warm evening in August 1937 a girl in love stood before a mirror.

Her name was Loretta. It was her reflection in the mirror she loved, and out of this dreamy, pleasing love there arose a sense of excitement that was restless and blind – which way would it move, what would happen? Her name was Loretta; she was pleased with that name too, though Loretta Botsford pleased her less. Her last name dragged down on her, it had no melody. She stood squinting into the plastic-rimmed mirror on her bureau, trying to get the best of the light, seeing inside her rather high-colored, healthy, ordinary prettiness a hint of something daring and dangerous. Looking into the mirror was like looking into the future; everything was there, waiting. It was not just that face she loved. She loved other things. During the week she worked at Ajax Laundry and Dry Cleaners, and she was very lucky to have that job, and during the week the steamy, rushed languor of her work built up in her a sense of excitement. What was going to happen? Today was Saturday.

Her face was rather full, and there was a slight mischievous puffiness about her cheeks that made her look younger than she was – she was sixteen – and her eyes were blue, a mindless, bland blue, not very sharp. Her lips were painted a deep scarlet, exactly the style of the day. Her eyebrows were plucked in exactly the style of the day. Did she not dream over the Sunday supplement features, and did she not linger on her way to work before the Trinity Theater in order to stare at the pictures? She wore a navy-blue dress pulled in tight at the waist. Her waist was surprisingly narrow, her shoulders a little broad, almost masculine; she was a strong girl. Upon her competent shoulders sat this fluttery, dreamy head, blond hair puffed out and falling down in coquettish curls past her ears, past her collar, down onto her back, so that when she ran along the sidewalk it blew out behind her and men stopped to stare at her; never did she bother to glance back at these men – they were like men in movies who do not appear in the foreground but only focus interest, show which way interest should be directed. She was in love with the thought of this. Behind her good clear skin was a universe of skin, all of it healthy. She loved this, she was in love with the fact of girls like her having come into existence, though she could not have expressed her feelings exactly. She said to her friend Rita, 'Sometimes I feel so happy over nothing I must be crazy.' Dragging around in the morning, trying to get her father up and trying to get her brother Brock fed and out before somebody started a fight, still she felt a peculiar sense of joy, of prickly excitement, that nothing could beat down. What was going to happen? 'Oh, you're not crazy,' Rita said thoughtfully, 'you just haven't been through it yet.'

She combed her hair with a heavy pink brush. It worried her to see her curls so listless – that was because of the heat. From the apartment across the way, through the open window, she could hear a radio playing music that meant Saturday night, and her heart began to pound with anticipation of the long hours ahead during which anything might happen. Her father, who had been out of work for almost ten years

and who couldn't do a thing, liked to lie in bed and drink and smoke, not caring if so many hours rushed by he'd never be able to get back – but Loretta felt that time was passing too quickly. It made her nervous. She scratched at her bare arm with the brush in a gentle, unconscious, caressing gesture, and felt the dreaminess of the late summer afternoon rise in her. In the kitchen someone sat down heavily, as if answering her, in response to her wondering. 45

- 2 The passage below describes the writer's experience of a gorilla family in the forests of Africa.
- (a) In the next chapter of his book the writer describes an encounter with another wild animal in another part of the world. Basing your answer closely on the language and style of the extract, write the opening to the chapter (between 120 and 150 words). [10]
- (b) Compare the language and style of your piece with those of the original extract. [15]

The most imperial creatures in the Garden were easily twice my size, and had they been so inclined, they could have batted the life out of my body with a casual backhand slap. I was a guest, not entirely welcome but tolerated because I abided by the rules. I stayed low and still, in a proper worshipful attitude. When I came upon a family of them on my last day in the Garden, Ndume, the one I knew best, the leader and patriarch, sighed as if to say, 'You again?' He didn't exactly frown – nothing that intense – but he compressed his lips slightly, and a small vertical ridge formed in the shiny black skin just above his nose. It was an expression of mild annoyance. 5

I thought I read some small curiosity there as well, so I crawled forward a bit. Ndume's expression softened, and I grunted twice, a polite custom among his kind. He returned the greeting, a deep, double guttural rasp. Neither of us moved for quite some time. He sat, and I lay, in a deep green tangle of luxuriant vegetation. A drifting mountain mist cooled and dampened our faces. It was not polite to stare, so we both shifted our eyes frequently. A residue of morning rain glittered on the leaves. When I looked again, Ndume was holding his chin in the palm of his hand. He seemed to be in a contemplative mood. I smiled at him, careful not to show my teeth, for this is an aggressive and impolite thing to do. Ndume smiled back, grunted courteously, and rose up onto all fours. He moved toward me, smiling vaguely and shifting his gaze in a well-bred manner. Despite the gleaming pelt of shiny black fur, I could see muscles the size of melons rolling in his upper arms. Ndume is a 'silverback', so called because of the saddle of silver hair – a sign of sexual maturity – across his broad back. 10 15 20

His odor was sharp: musky and sweet with a faint sour tang. He could have reached out and touched me. Instead he cocked his head slightly, like a man trying to solve a tricky but trivial puzzle. There was a rolling, cloudlike fog in the Garden now, and we regarded each other, man and gorilla, through a swirl of dreamlike mist. His eyes were a deep golden brown under the heavy black ridges of his brow. I felt unreal, strangely insubstantial, out of time, as though the mist between us was the stuff of millennia. 25

Ndume strode off into the forest just as the sun broke through the clouds and began to burn off the mist. We were on the lower slopes of a volcano called Visoke, just above Lake Ngezi. The temperature rose to seventy degrees, and the eleven gorillas of Ndume's family were settling down for their afternoon siesta. Two infants, both less than two years old, and two juveniles, both about four, lay together in a furry heap. One of the juveniles stripped the leaves off a vine and stuffed them into his mouth. An infant reached up, grabbed the juvenile, and pulled him backward. The juvenile's mouth was open, and his face shone with a kind of idiot joy. His play chuckle, a *heh-heh-heh* sound, was barely audible. It resembled the sound a child might make laughing helplessly in church. 30 35

The largest juvenile, a six-year-old female named Picasso, climbed a small tree and stared down at me. Slowly the tree began to topple, bending until the trunk broke with a sharp crack and Picasso rolled into the dense vegetation on the forest floor. I was never able to decide whether gorillas are extraordinarily bad judges of 40

which trees will hold them or whether they simply regard riding a breaking branch as an exciting and efficient way to get down to the ground.

Ndume clambered up the thick trunk of a huge hagenia. These are immense, gracefully expansive trees about forty feet high. The crotch formed by the trunk and the great lower branches is often large enough to accommodate several adult gorillas. Ndume found one such platform, rolled over heavily onto his back, one long arm dangling, and let the warm sun bake his chest and legs. One of the juveniles climbed up to be with Ndume, settling carefully into the big male's armpit. An infant found a soft spot to sleep in the middle of Ndume's huge belly. 50

There were yellow flowers blooming on the senecios and on the vine-entangled hypericum trees. Below, the surface of Lake Ngezi was as still and blue as the sky above. The chain of volcanoes stretched out, noble and massive in the distance, ranging all the way to Uganda in one direction and to Zaire in another. The infant crawled over the silverback's chest and pulled at the hair under the juvenile's chin. The two dissolved into play chuckles and rolled over Ndume's belly, wrestling indolently as the patriarch yawned, showing his massive canines. 55

I felt, in that bright, aureate moment, that I was watching one of the loveliest scenes on the face of the earth. It seemed like a tableau out of time: the lazy frolic, the drowsy family at peace in the provident forest, the special beauty of the lake and the mountains. I found myself thinking of the dawn of man, of the Garden of Eden. 60

The sensation was almost physically seductive, and I wanted the moment to last forever – especially since I carried with me a fund of ominous knowledge. What I knew tinged the idyllic setting with a sense of doom. 65

3 The passage below describes a family outing.

- (a) Basing your answer closely on the style and language of the extract, continue the passage (between 120 and 150 words).
- (b) Compare the style and language of your piece with those of the original extract. [15]

And the next moment the three Mother and Fay and Totty were outside the gate and mother with a broom-like motion of her arms was sweeping the two little girls before her.

O the train and the coloured pictures on the station, South America and Australia, and the bottle of fizzy drink that you could only half finish because you were too full, and the ham sandwiches that curled up at the edges, because they were stale, Dad said, and he *knew*, and the rabbits and cows and bulls outside in the paddocks, and the sheep running away from the noise and the houses that came and went like a dream, clackety-clack, Kaitangata, Kaitangata, and the train stopping and panting and the man with the stick tapping the wheels and the huge rubber hose to give the engine a drink, and the voices of the people in the carriage on and on and waiting. 5 10

– Don't forget Beach Street, Mum, Dad had said. Dad was away at work up at six o'clock early and couldn't come. It was strange without him for he always managed. He got the tea and the fizzy drinks and the sandwiches and he knew which station was which and where and why and how, but Mother didn't. Mother was often too late for the fizzy drinks and she coughed before she spoke to the children and then in a whisper in case the people in the carriage should hear and think things, and she said I'm sure I don't know kiddies when they asked about the station, but she was big and warm and knew about cats, and Father was hard and bony and his face prickled when he kissed you. 15 20

O look the beach coming it must be coming.

The train stopped with a jerk and a cloud of smoke as if it had died and finished and would never go anywhere else just stay by the sea though you couldn't see the water from here, and the carriages would be empty and slowly rusting as if the people in them had come to an end and could never go back as if they had found what they were looking for after years and years of travelling on and on. But they were disturbed and peeved at being forced to move. The taste of smoke lingered in their mouths, they had to reach up for hat and coat and case, and comb their hair and make up their face again, certainly they had arrived but you have to be neat arriving with your shoes brushed and your hair in place and the shine off your nose. Fay and Totty watched the little cases being snipped open and shut and the two little girls knew for sure that never would they grow up and be people in bulgy dresses, people knitting purl and plain with the ball of wool hanging safe and clean from a neat brown bag with hollyhocks and poppies on it. Hollyhocks and poppies and a big red initial, to show that you were you and not the somebody else you feared you might be, but Fay and Totty didn't worry they were going to the Beach. 25 30 35

The Beach. Why wasn't everyone going to the Beach? It seemed they were the only ones for when they set off down the fir-bordered road that led to the sound the sea kept making forever now in their ears, there was no one else going. Where had the others gone? Why weren't there other people? 40



---

*Copyright Acknowledgements:*

- Question 1            © Joyce Carol Oates; 'Them'; *The Critical Eye*, Murray Pollinger Literary Agency.  
Question 2            Extract from JAGUARS RIPPED MY FLESH by Tim Cahill published by Black Swan. Used by permission of The Random House Group Limited.  
Question 3            Reproduced with permission of Curtis Brown Ltd, London on behalf of the Janet Frame Literary Trust. Copyright © Janet Frame 1961

Permission to reproduce items where third-party owned material protected by copyright is included has been sought and cleared where possible. Every reasonable effort has been made by the publisher (UCLES) to trace copyright holders, but if any items requiring clearance have unwittingly been included, the publisher will be pleased to make amends at the earliest possible opportunity.

University of Cambridge International Examinations is part of the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate (UCLES), which is itself a department