



**Cambridge International Examinations**  
Cambridge International General Certificate of Secondary Education

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**FIRST LANGUAGE ENGLISH**

**0500/03**

Paper 3 Directed Writing and Composition

**For Examination from 2015**

SPECIMEN READING BOOKLET INSERT

**2 hours**

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**READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST**

This Reading Booklet Insert contains the reading passages for use with **Section 1, Question 1** on the Question Paper.

You may annotate this Reading Booklet Insert and use the blank spaces for planning.

This Reading Booklet Insert is **not** assessed by the Examiner.

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This document consists of **3** printed pages and **1** blank page.

Read the **two** passages carefully, and then answer **Question 1** on the Question Paper.

**Fact file: Home-schooling**

- The most common reason for choosing home-schooling is that parents are not satisfied with local schools.
- Many home-schooled children are allowed to sit exams or participate in clubs and social activities in a local school.
- Research shows that home-schooled children consistently outperform school-educated children at all academic levels.
- A significantly higher proportion of home-schooled students, compared to school students, go on to university.
- Many universities claim that they do not discriminate against home-schooled students.

*In this magazine article, a university student describes the experience of being home schooled.*

### **My School was my Home! by Fleur Britten**

I don't have a single GCSE or A level, but I'm in my third year at University, studying law. I was home educated from the age of eight until 18. One of the universities I applied to responded by email, saying: 'Did you forget to fill the form in?' It's tricky and expensive to get qualifications if you're home educated, especially if you want to do lots of them, and there's no incentive for schools to assist pupils educated at home. Some universities refused to consider my application; the university I am at was marvellous, though, and treated me like any other candidate.

Home-education was never the plan. My school closed down when I was eight, in the middle of the academic year. My parents asked me if I'd like to give home-education a go. I agreed, and I always enjoyed it. My father went out to work whilst my mother worked from home, but she was there all the time for us. She had done a bit of teaching before, although she isn't qualified.

Home-education is much less drastic than people imagine. It's not as though you're in your house all day, never meeting people. Other children are only in school for six hours a day, after all. The only difference is that for those six hours you are not sitting in a classroom, but getting around and leading a more active life.

My parents allowed my younger brother and me to take our own approach to studies – we were supervised, but it was very informal. We never had deadlines, exams, homework or even a timetable, but I don't have a problem with self-discipline. I might do nothing on a Wednesday, but work all weekend. I'd go through phases of hiking in the hills or reading in a corner for two weeks. In the beginning, however, I did spend a few months watching appalling TV and playing computer games. Had it gone on, my parents would have acted, but I got over it. There's only so much daytime television you can watch!

I became fascinated with Antarctica, so my parents persuaded me to research it in more detail. They nudged me into subjects that I'd need, such as maths, and we had a French tutor who came weekly. Education is much broader than someone sitting you down and telling you things. Mine was a question of working out what areas I was interested in, then finding the relevant book, website or museum.

I discovered that academic institutions – the British Antarctic Survey and the Science Museum, for example – are very willing to respond to an interested ten-year-old. I appreciated the freedom to pursue my interests to a greater extent than the school curriculum would allow. It's common that children in home-education don't get bored, and my lack of knowledge of advanced physics is not something I mourn.

I wasn't learning in complete isolation; there was a group of us who would get together for science experiments and museum trips. It is estimated that between 50,000 and 80,000 British children are educated at home each year, and there's a support service, Education Otherwise, that organises local groups and has an advice line.

People who haven't come across home-education before seem to think we have no social skills. I didn't find socialising a problem – I live in a city and made friends on my street. I also went to a music college and made friends there. You have to be more proactive if you want a social life, because it is not provided for you – it's more like being an adult. I had a lot of work experience because I was free to go out and do it. I don't think home-education is perfect; it's just another valid model, though I've done well from it. I had a pleasant education, and it landed me a place at a good university.

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