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Other names

**Pearson Edexcel**  
**International GCSE**

Centre Number

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Candidate Number

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# English Language A

## Paper 1

Monday 16 January 2017 – Morning  
**Time: 2 hours 15 minutes**

Paper Reference

**4EA0/01**

**You do not need any other materials.**

Total Marks

### Instructions

- Use **black** ink or ball-point pen.
- **Fill in the boxes** at the top of this page with your name, centre number and candidate number.
- Answer **all** questions.
- Answer the questions in the spaces provided  
– *there may be more space than you need.*

### Information

- The total mark for this paper is 60.
- The marks for **each** question are shown in brackets  
– *use this as a guide as to how much time to spend on each question.*
- The quality of written communication will be assessed in your responses to Questions 6 and 7  
– *you should take particular care on these questions with your spelling, punctuation and grammar, as well as the clarity of expression.*
- Copies of the Edexcel Anthology for International GCSE and Certificate Qualifications in English Language and Literature may **not** be brought into the examination.
- Dictionaries may **not** be used in this examination.

### Advice

- Read each question carefully before you start to answer it.
- Try to answer every question.
- Check your answers if you have time at the end.

Turn over ►

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## SECTION A: Reading

You should spend about 45 minutes on this section.

Read the following passage carefully and then answer the questions which follow.

The writer is a young boy who spends the summer at his family's cottage beside a remote lake.

### Unwelcome Neighbours



Sometimes, even when you're little, you know when life is perfect. You just know. The sun woke me early and it dazzled off the white siding on the cottage. It was so clear and it was so bright it almost hurt just to keep my eyes open.

The lake looked like an enormous puddle of mercury and it gave such a pure reflection of the cloudless morning sky and the forested shore on the other side I couldn't tell up from down. When the water looked like that I knew that nothing would happen. Fish wouldn't bite. Ducks wouldn't fly. Only dragonflies enjoyed that nothingness.

Each calm, blue day, summer got prettier and prettier. The chill of the first nights softened and by mid-July I slept only on cotton sheets. The flannel sheets were put away until cold nights returned. The days stretched out like cats lazing in the sun.

In that sagging, naked heat, Grace and I and the other children never wilted. We melted into a caramel brown but remained startlingly white under our bathing suits.

Soon the sun started to take its toll on the land. The pasture behind the cottage singed<sup>1</sup> but somehow the flowers on the roadside always stayed alive, turning their heads to the long summer sun. My mother was ever present but always gave us our freedom. If we were near the cottage, each morning before lunch she brought icy Kool-Aid, the very essence of summer, for us to drink. If we were away she went first to the back of the cottage and then to the dock and in each place she briskly rang her bell to call us for lunch.

On weekends my father arrived and absently busied himself. There was always something to saw, something to build or to repair and whatever it was it was usually made from wood. In the shade of the grove of cedars by the dock he kept his tools and there he would saw and saw, golden sawdust clinging to the sweaty hair on his brawny freckled

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arms and deep chest. At his feet sawdust collected in neat little piles as he cut deeper into sun-warmed woody pulp. To me, the sound of wood being sawed was the sound of summer. There was an almost biological rhythm to the sound, a dignified thrum, calming, contemplative, relaxing. 25

Our cottage had always been the last on the point, a dead end. Beyond was pasture where early last summer Mrs Nichols' cows grazed and drank from the water. Last July, one day, when I returned to the cottage, Mrs Nichols was having a cup of tea with my mother. 30

'Mrs Nichols has brought us some beautiful eggs,' Mum said.

'She tells me that Mr Everett wants his field back so we won't be seeing her cows any longer. She'll be grazing them elsewhere.'

I thought only children found Mr Everett, who owned the next farm on the paved road, scary but now I wondered whether adults did too. 35

When Mrs Nichols was leaving, my mother went to the door with her and holding Mrs Nichols' hand in both of hers she said, 'Everything will be alright,' and kissed her on the cheek. Mrs Nichols looked startled, then smiled and said, 'Thank you,' and left.

Then, at the end of that summer, builders arrived. They dug a foundation and now there was a big brick house, a year-round house where the pasture had been, the first one that was built at the lake. 40

I was sad when that happened. The lake was for summer. The rest of the year it should be abandoned. It should have its life back, alone, but now people would live there year round. Besides, I liked being 'the end', the last family, with nothing beyond. No one ever drove or walked past our cottage. Now, looking south, it was no longer wild. I didn't see nature. I saw a perfectly manicured lawn. I didn't talk about that, not even with Grace. It was too painful. 45

But no one ever seemed to live in the big redbrick home. Someone came to cut the grass every week but the boat remained unused in the boathouse and seaweed gathered on the shore. From the time my father built our cottage I had waded in the water in front of where the new house now was, searching for crayfish, but one day a sign appeared on the lakefront. 'NO TRESPASSING.' 50

Glossary

<sup>1</sup>singed – turned brown at the edges



1 What does the mother give the children to drink?

.....

(Total for Question 1 = 1 mark)

2 Look again at lines 8 to 18. Give **three** words or phrases that the writer uses to show how hot the summer is.

1 .....

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2 .....

.....

3 .....

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(Total for Question 2 = 3 marks)

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4 How does the writer try to create interest in this passage?

In your answer you should write about:

- the description of life at the lakeside cottage
- the writer's thoughts and feelings about the building of the new house
- particular words, phrases and techniques.

You may include **brief** quotations from the passage to support your answer.

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(Total for Question 4 = 12 marks)

**TOTAL FOR SECTION A = 20 MARKS**





## SECTION B: Reading and Writing

You should spend about 45 minutes on this section.

You must answer both questions, 5 and 6.

Remind yourself of the passage *From A Passage to Africa* from the Edexcel Anthology.

**George Alagiah writes about his experiences as a television reporter during the war in Somalia, Africa in the 1990s. He won a special award for his report on the incidents described in this passage.**

I saw a thousand hungry, lean, scared and betrayed faces as I criss-crossed Somalia between the end of 1991 and December 1992, but there is one I will never forget.

I was in a little hamlet just outside Gufgaduud, a village in the back of beyond, a place the aid agencies had yet to reach. In my notebook I had jotted down instructions on how to get there. 'Take the Badale Road for a few kilometres till the end of the tarmac, turn right on to a dirt track, stay on it for about forty-five minutes – Gufgaduud. Go another fifteen minutes approx. – like a ghost village.' ...

5

In the ghoulish manner of journalists on the hunt for the most striking pictures, my cameraman ... and I tramped from one hut to another. What might have appalled us when we'd started our trip just a few days before no longer impressed us much. The search for the shocking is like the craving for a drug: you require heavier and more frequent doses the longer you're at it. Pictures that stun the editors one day are written off as the same old stuff the next. This sounds callous, but it is just a fact of life. It's how we collect and compile the images that so move people in the comfort of their sitting rooms back home.

10

15

There was Amina Abdirahman, who had gone out that morning in search of wild, edible roots, leaving her two young girls lying on the dirt floor of their hut. They had been sick for days, and were reaching the final, enervating stages of terminal hunger. Habiba was ten years old and her sister, Ayaan, was nine. By the time Amina returned, she had only one daughter. Habiba had died. No rage, no whimpering, just a passing away – that simple, frictionless, motionless deliverance from a state of half-life to death itself. It was, as I said at the time in my dispatch, a vision of 'famine away from the headlines, a famine of quiet suffering and lonely death'.

20

There was the old woman who lay in her hut, abandoned by relations who were too weak to carry her on their journey to find food. It was the smell that drew me to her doorway: the smell of decaying flesh. Where her shinbone should have been there was a festering wound the size of my hand. She'd been shot in the leg as the retreating army of the deposed dictator... took revenge on whoever it found in its way. The shattered leg had fused into the gentle V-shape of a boomerang. It was rotting; she was rotting. You could see it in her sick, yellow eyes and smell it in the putrid air she recycled with every struggling breath she took.

25

30

And then there was the face I will never forget.

My reaction to everyone else I met that day was a mixture of pity and revulsion\*. Yes, revulsion. The degeneration of the human body, sucked of its natural vitality by the twin evils of hunger and disease, is a disgusting thing. We never say so in our TV reports. It's a taboo that has yet to be breached. To be in a feeding centre is to hear and smell the excretion of fluids by people who are beyond controlling their bodily functions. To be in

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a feeding centre is surreptitiously\* to wipe your hands on the back of your trousers after you've held the clammy palm of a mother who has just cleaned vomit from her child's mouth.

40

There's pity, too, because even in this state of utter despair they aspire to a dignity that is almost impossible to achieve. An old woman will cover her shrivelled body with a soiled cloth as your gaze turns towards her. Or the old and dying man who keeps his hoe next to the mat with which, one day soon, they will shroud his corpse, as if he means to go out and till the soil once all this is over.

45

I saw that face for only a few seconds, a fleeting meeting of eyes before the face turned away, as its owner retreated into the darkness of another hut. In those brief moments there had been a smile, not from me, but from the face. It was not a smile of greeting, it was not a smile of joy – how could it be? – but it was a smile nonetheless. It touched me in a way I could not explain. It moved me in a way that went beyond pity or revulsion.

50

What was it about that smile? I had to find out. I urged my translator to ask the man why he had smiled. He came back with an answer. 'It's just that he was embarrassed to be found in this condition,' the translator explained. And then it clicked. That's what the smile had been about. It was the feeble smile that goes with apology, the kind of smile you might give if you felt you had done something wrong.

55

Normally inured\* to stories of suffering, accustomed to the evidence of deprivation, I was unsettled by this one smile in a way I had never been before. There is an unwritten code between the journalist and his subjects in these situations. The journalist observes, the subject is observed. The journalist is active, the subject is passive. But this smile had turned the tables on that tacit agreement. Without uttering a single word, the man had posed a question that cut to the heart of the relationship between me and him, between us and them, between the rich world and the poor world. If he was embarrassed to be found weakened by hunger and ground down by conflict, how should I feel to be standing there so strong and confident?

60

I resolved there and then that I would write the story of Gufgaduud with all the power and purpose I could muster. It seemed at the time, and still does, the only adequate answer a reporter can give to the man's question.

65

I have one regret about that brief encounter in Gufgaduud. Having searched through my notes and studied the dispatch that the BBC broadcast, I see that I never found out what the man's name was. Yet meeting him was a seminal moment in the gradual collection of experiences we call context. Facts and figures are the easy part of journalism. Knowing where they sit in the great scheme of things is much harder. So, my nameless friend, if you are still alive, I owe you one.

70

George Alagiah

\**revulsion*: disgust

\**surreptitiously*: secretly

\**inured*: hardened



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5 How does the writer show his thoughts and feelings about his experiences in Somalia?

You should refer closely to the passage to support your answer. You may include **brief** quotations.

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**(Total for Question 5 = 10 marks for reading)**



6 "I know I can't change my past but, looking back, there are things that I regret."

An internet site is running a competition to reward the best writing from young people on this subject.

Write your entry for this competition.

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(Total for Question 6 = 10 marks for writing)

**TOTAL FOR SECTION B = 20 MARKS**





**SECTION C: Writing**

**You should spend about 45 minutes on this section.**

**7** "Children today lack imagination, are unfit and spend too much time indoors."

Explain your views on this statement.

You may choose to write about:

- how children spend their free time
- how much exercise children get
- any other ideas you may have.

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**(Total for Question 7 = 20 marks for writing)**

**TOTAL FOR SECTION C = 20 MARKS  
TOTAL FOR PAPER = 60 MARKS**



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