OXFORD AQA
INTERNATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

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I declare this is my own work.

INTERNATIONAL GCSE
ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE
Reading Paper

Wednesday 1 November 2023 07:00 GMT Time allowed: 1 hour 15 minutes

Materials
You will need no other materials.

Instructions
- Answer all questions in **English**.
- Use black ink or black ball-point pen.
- Fill in the boxes at the top of this page.
- You must answer the questions in the spaces provided. Do not write outside the box around each page or on blank pages.
- If you need extra space for your answer(s), use the lined pages at the end of this book. Write the question number against your answer(s).
- Do all rough work in this book. Cross through any work you do not want to be marked.

Information
- The marks for questions are shown in brackets.
- The maximum mark for this paper is 60.
- You must **not** use a dictionary.

For Examiner's Use	
Question	Mark
01–06	
07–14	
15–24	
25–35	
TOTAL	

Do not write outside the box

Text 1 **Email**

Read the first part of this email from Hassan to Abed.

Answer questions **01** to **03**.

Hi Abed

1 Sorry I've not been in contact recently. You might have heard that I broke my leg playing hockey last weekend and spent a few days in hospital. I finally got out on Friday and was very relieved to get home. Thankfully, I'm not in pain and will hopefully be playing sport again soon.

2 I met a couple of friendly people in hospital. They were the same age as me and had also injured themselves playing sport, so we had a lot in common. They made me laugh a lot and kept me company, which was just as well as I'd lost my phone. I think I probably left it at the sports field.

Write the correct letter in the box for questions **01** to **03**.

0 1 When did Hassan get out of hospital?

[1 mark]

A	On Monday
B	On Wednesday
C	On Friday

Do not write outside the box

0 2 What sport was Hassan playing when he broke his leg?

[1 mark]

A	Football
B	Hockey
C	Rugby

0 3 What is the **main** point of **paragraph 2**?

[1 mark]

A	To ask Abed if he can find Hassan's phone
B	To describe the people Hassan met in hospital
C	To explain how people made Hassan laugh

Turn over for the next question

Do not write outside the box

Read the second part of the email.

Answer questions **04** to **06**.

3 While I was in hospital, I started to think about all those boys and girls who are not as fortunate as me. There are some young people who have to spend a lot of time in hospital, so I've decided to try to help them in some small way. I want to raise money to buy some laptops that they can use in hospital to play games and watch movies.

4 I plan to get in touch with local businesses and ask if they can donate some money. It would be great if you could help me. I need someone to help me contact business owners, and also decide which laptops to buy. It wouldn't take very long and would be a really worthwhile thing to do.

Let me know what you think.

Hassan

Write the correct letter in the box for questions **04** to **06**.

0 4 Read the following statements.

Which statement is correct?

[1 mark]

A	Hassan wants to contact the hospital.
B	Hassan wants to talk to business owners.
C	Hassan wants to watch some movies.

Do not write outside the box

0 5 What does Hassan want to buy with the money he raises?

[1 mark]

A	Games
B	Hospitals
C	Laptops

0 6 What is the **main** purpose of the email?

[1 mark]

A	To ask Abed to help raise money
B	To describe what it was like in hospital
C	To explain what business owners do

6

Turn over for the next question

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Text 2 **Preparing for Exams**

Read the first part of this article written for students. It is about preparing for exams.

Answer questions **07** to **10**.

Preparing for Exams

1 Exams are a challenging part of any young person's education. Turning over the exam paper and then writing furiously in silence can be difficult. Yet perhaps the most challenging part of the whole process is the preparation beforehand. So, what can you do to give yourself the best chance to succeed?

Making plans

2 Most people agree that exam preparation is the key to success. Start by working out how many weeks you have left before your exams. Next, make a revision plan. You should think about how many subjects you are studying and which ones you feel need most attention. You will also need to factor in free time and any other commitments you have during the revision period.

3 It is important to stick to your plan. There may be times when unexpected things occur that make you reorganise your plan but try to follow the plan you lay out as far as possible. Some students keep their plans on their phones and some print them out as a wall chart. However you choose to do it, try to keep to the schedule.

0 7 What does the article suggest is the most challenging part of the exams process?

[1 mark]

_____

_____

0 8 How does the article say that students should begin their examination preparation?

[1 mark]

_____

_____

Do not write outside the box

0 9 List **two** things the article states a student should consider when making a revision plan.

[2 marks]

1 _____

2 _____

1 0 Which of these statements best describes the **main** point of **paragraph 3**?

Write the correct letter in the box.

[1 mark]

A	To advise students to follow their revision plan
B	To describe how to make a wall chart
C	To explain how revision plans can change

Turn over for the next question

Do not write outside the box

Read the second part of the article.

Answer questions **11** to **14**.

Revision

4 Some students commit the error of revising things they already know. There is little point revising things you are confident with. The best use of your preparation time is to focus on things you are unsure about. Be honest with yourself about your weaker topics and identify precisely which skills you need to practise. You can use online quizzes to work out which bits of knowledge you need to improve. You can do this on your own, or perhaps with a friend. You should also check over essays and work you have done in class, re-reading your teacher's advice about areas you need to develop.

5 Revision can be quite stressful for some students. They feel as if they can't remember the information they are trying to learn. This feeling is natural and very common. It can be a good idea to break down information into smaller chunks as this makes it easier to handle. Remember that the process of revision is a gradual one: you shouldn't expect to master everything all at once. Instead, revise little and often, and focus on the progress you are making. Make sure you eat well when revising. You can't rely on chocolate!

Support

6 If you do feel that you are struggling, it's important to talk to a friend, relative or teacher. Sometimes it really helps to talk about your feelings. You should also make time to do other things: playing sport, going shopping, or simply hanging out with friends is a great stress-reliever.

1 1 In **paragraph 4**, the writer says, 'Some students commit the error of revising things they already know.'

Explain in your own words what the phrase 'commit the error' means.

[2 marks]

Do not write outside the box

1 2 Read **paragraph 4**.

Which **two** statements are correct?

Write the correct letters in the boxes.

[2 marks]

A	Ask your friend's advice on areas to improve
B	Concentrate on topics you know well
C	Look back through your classwork
D	Quizzes can help you identify things to improve

1 3 Read **paragraph 5**.

Which **two** statements are correct?

Write the correct letters in the boxes.

[2 marks]

A	Eating chocolate will help you cope with exams.
B	Focusing on small bits of information can help.
C	Revising is an ongoing, steady process.
D	Revision is stressful for every student.

Do not write outside the box

1 4 What is the **main** purpose of the whole text?

Write the correct letter in the box.

[1 mark]

A	To explain why talking to other people is helpful
B	To give some guidance about exam preparation
C	To inform the reader about online study support

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Turn over for the next question

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Text 3 The Return of Records

Read the first part of this article about an older way of listening to music.

Answer questions **15** to **19**.

1 These days, most people use online streaming platforms to listen to music. With only a phone and a pair of headphones, you can listen to virtually any type of music you wish. But an older way of listening to music is making a comeback: the record.

2 Streaming is clearly here to stay, with over 600 million subscribers to online platforms each year. But sales of physical records (or vinyl, as they are known because of the material they are made from) have steadily increased over the past few years too. During 2022, 91 million records were sold globally. Although the vinyl record is an old format, it is on the rise again. So, what could account for this phenomenon?

3 I spoke to the sales director at one of the companies making vinyl records in Guangzhou and asked her why people are buying these products again. 'People like the feel of records in their hands,' she said. 'They enjoy looking at the artwork on the cover and more importantly, prefer the sound of records.' Record buyers themselves have also told me they like to collect records and feel part of a community of other record buyers.

4 I personally think the act of visiting a record store and buying a record is a rewarding experience. Browsing through a collection of vinyl, chatting to other buyers, and carrying your purchase home is all part of the fun.

1 5 Read **paragraph 1**.

Which statement is correct?

Write the correct letter in the box.

[1 mark]

A	Records are now the most popular way to listen to music.
B	Streaming platforms and records are equally popular ways to listen to music.
C	Streaming platforms are the most popular way to listen to music.

Do not write outside the box

1 6 Which of these statements best describes the **main** point of **paragraph 2**?

Write the correct letter in the box.

[1 mark]

A	To advise listeners about the best online platforms to use
B	To describe how record sales have increased in recent years
C	To explain to readers what the word 'globally' means

1 7 In **paragraph 2**, the writer says, 'what could account for this phenomenon?'.

Explain in your own words what the phrase 'account for' means.

[1 mark]

1 8 From **paragraph 3**, list **three** reasons why people buy records.

[3 marks]

1

2

3

1 9 In **paragraph 4** the writer says, 'buying a record is a rewarding experience'.

Explain in your own words what the phrase 'a rewarding experience' means.

[2 marks]

Do not write outside the box

Read the second part of the article.

Answer questions **20** to **24**.

5 You might assume that it's older people who are buying vinyl records again, but statistics suggest that record-buying is a young person's pursuit. I asked the owner of one of Cairo's oldest record shops if that really was the case. 'Undoubtedly,' he assured me. 'Every weekend, lots of young people come here to browse through our records. They also purchase music magazines, charge their phones and chat. It's a wonderful social experience.'

6 My own experience of buying records was like that. As a younger person, I spent many happy hours in cramped record stores looking for, and occasionally finding, rare records I'd been tracking down for months. Being able to immediately find them on my phone these days is far less fulfilling. Sometimes, the thrill of searching for something is a large part of the attraction.

7 There are disadvantages of vinyl records, of course. For a start, they're easily scratched and they're also hard to store. I can store thousands of songs on my phone, but I'd need a whole room in my house to store thousands of records. They also require bulky equipment such as a turntable to play records. Records are clearly far more inconvenient than phones.

8 So, what does the future hold for the record? Is it likely to regain its dominance? Most forecasters think that the boom in sales will subside in the years ahead. Records will probably never sell as well as they once did, but there'll always be a market for them. The fact that more singers and groups are releasing their music as records is a good sign. It means that vinyl records do have a future of sorts.

Do not write outside the box

2 0 In **paragraph 5**, the shop owner mentions **four** things young people do in his shop.

Which **four** things does the shop owner mention?

Write the correct letters in the boxes.

[4 marks]

A	Buy magazines
B	Charge their phones
C	Exchange records
D	Have conversations
E	Look at records
F	Message each other
G	Read magazines
H	Swap phone numbers

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

2 1 In **paragraph 6**, the writer says she spent time in ‘cramped record stores’.

Explain in your own words what the word ‘cramped’ means.

[1 mark]

_____

_____

2 2 In **paragraph 7**, the writer mentions the disadvantages of vinyl records.

List **two** of these disadvantages.

[2 marks]

1 _____

2 _____

Do not write outside the box

2 3 In **paragraph 8**, the writer asks if the record will 'regain its dominance'.

Explain in your own words what the phrase 'regain its dominance' means.

[2 marks]

2 4 Which statement best describes the whole article?

Write the correct letter in the box.

[1 mark]

A	It discusses the material records are made from.
B	It explains how records are becoming popular again.
C	It gives advice about different ways to listen to music.

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Text 4 **A Visit to Berlin**

Read the first part of the text about a visit to Berlin, the capital city of Germany.

Answer questions **25** and **26**.

1 I arrived in Berlin in the ferocious August sun. For some reason, I imagined the city would be unattractive and austere, yet as I emerged from the subway, the heat and beauty of the place struck me immediately. It was midday and the soundtrack of city life played out: traffic rumbled past, tourists debated where to eat, and a busker sang pop songs in German.

2 Once I'd checked into my hotel and unpacked, I took in the view from my bedroom window and marvelled at the architecture. I thought about the week ahead and began to plan what to do, noting down ideas and checking out some places on my laptop. I felt exhausted from the journey and before long, I lay down on my bed and fell asleep.

2 5 In **paragraph 1**, the writer says, 'I imagined the city would be unattractive and austere'.

Explain in your own words what this phrase means.

[3 marks]

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

2 6 In **paragraph 2**, what does the writer do after he has unpacked?

List **four** things he mentions.

[4 marks]

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

4 _____

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Read the second part of the text.

Answer questions **27** to **31**.

3 Berlin is a modern city with a turbulent history: it combines innovative buildings and reminders of earlier conflict. It's a city that celebrates its many virtues and acknowledges its darker stories. I wanted to see both sides of this great city and so the next day I used the rapid train system to get to my first destination, the East Side Gallery.

4 The East Side Gallery is in the centre of Berlin. It's an art collection but a very different one. It's an open-air, permanent set of murals and street art, first painted in 1990. The images themselves are painted directly onto the old Berlin Wall, the concrete barrier that used to divide the eastern and western parts of the city. There are 105 pieces of art in this gallery. They show images of the artists' hopes for a better world. It was awe-inspiring to see, and I felt a surge of optimism as I walked on.

5 The area beyond the gallery was less picturesque, yet it was still a delight to explore. The compact old houses and concrete buildings seemed to hold a historical magic of their own. I then paused for lunch at midday in a small café before planning my route to Potsdamer Platz.

27 In **paragraph 3**, the writer says, 'a turbulent history'.

Explain in your own words what this phrase means.

[2 marks]

_____

_____

_____

_____

28 In **paragraph 4**, the writer gives the reader some facts about the East Side Gallery.

List **three** things the writer says about the East Side Gallery.

[3 marks]

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

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2 9 What is the **main** point of **paragraph 4**?

Write the correct letter in the box.

[1 mark]

A	To describe the history and features of an art collection
B	To describe the location and story of the Berlin Wall
C	To describe the artists' ideas and messages in detail

3 0 In **paragraph 5**, the writer says the area beyond the gallery was 'less picturesque'.

Explain in your own words what this phrase means.

[1 mark]

3 1 Read **paragraphs 4** and **5**.

Which **two** statements are correct?

Write the correct letters in the boxes.

[2 marks]

A	The writer explores the area on foot.
B	The writer has a slightly negative reaction to the art.
C	The writer notices some large houses in the area.
D	The writer sees the concrete buildings in the morning.

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Read the third part of the text.

Answer questions **32** to **35**.

6 Potsdamer Platz is a former wasteland in the heart of the city that has been transformed into a tourist magnet.

7 It's a place which until the 1990s was neglected and underwhelming. These days, it's a stunning collection of shops, businesses and nightlife, a striking example of urban renewal. I stood for a while and gazed up at the jaw-dropping skyscrapers, those mesmerising glass giants that command the skyline and symbolise the brilliance of the area.

8 Aside from the beautifully glitzy buildings and spectacular places to spend money, there are well-designed cinemas, museums and theatres. I decided to return later in the week and watch a musical and perhaps have dinner in one of the many restaurants.

9 After only a day in the city, it seemed to me that Berlin was a glorious melting pot of cultures. I heard seven different languages spoken in the short time I had my coffee in an airy side street café. It really felt like the world in miniature, a place of easy joy where diverse groups of people exist happily.

3 2 In **paragraph 6**, the writer says, 'Potsdamer Platz is a former wasteland in the heart of the city that has been transformed into a tourist magnet.'

What does this sentence mean?

Write the correct letter in the box.

[1 mark]

A	Potsdamer Platz is a redeveloped, popular area for visitors. It's in the middle of the city.
B	Potsdamer Platz is in the centre of town. It used to be quite nice but is now even better.
C	Potsdamer Platz is on the outskirts of Berlin. There used to be nothing there but now it attracts visitors.

Do not write outside the box

3 3 From **paragraphs 7** and **8**, list **four** phrases which show that the writer is impressed by Potsdamer Platz.

[4 marks]

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

4 _____

3 4 From **paragraph 9**, list **two** things the writer says that show that Berlin is a place that attracts lots of different types of people.

[2 marks]

1 _____

2 _____

3 5 Which statement best describes the whole text?

Write the correct letter in the box.

[1 mark]

A	The text describes a writer's enjoyable trip to a capital city where he visited places of interest.
B	The text describes a writer's fun visit to a city during which he mainly visited cafes and shops.
C	The text describes a writer's visit to a city where he had a mixture of positive and negative experiences.

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END OF QUESTIONS

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