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FIRST LANGUAGE ENGLISH (US)

0524/02

Paper 2 Reading Passages (Extended)

For Examination from 2015

SPECIMEN READING BOOKLET INSERT

2 hours

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

This Reading Booklet Insert contains the reading passages for use with **all** the questions 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.

This document consists of **4** printed pages.



Part 1

Read **Passage A** carefully, and then answer **Questions 1** and **2** on the Question Paper.

Passage A: The Beast of Bodmin Moor

Nicole Panteli is a journalist for a weekly local newspaper. They send her to the large, remote and wild area of countryside where she lived as a child, to find out more about the so-called big cat which is preying on local sheep.

Nicole was lost. It was easy to lose one's way on the moor, especially on a November afternoon when the light was thickening and the landscape stretched the same unvariegated gray in all directions. She drove along a narrow, empty road, looking for a road sign or any building which might contain an inhabitant to give her directions. A fleeting, shadowy movement by the roadside reminded her of the tales of the Beast of Bodmin Moor which had fascinated her as a child. She remembered being told that a vicious predator had killed large numbers of sheep, but that a government investigation had not found evidence to prove that there was a foreign big cat in the area, and had concluded that native wild animals were the culprits. Originally excited when she heard that a leopard skull had been found in the river, she was disappointed when the local museum was convinced that it was part of a leopard-skin rug put there as a hoax.

However, the sightings and attacks continued over the next 20 years after she left the moor, and now she was returning to find out why the local farmers were still convinced that the injuries to their livestock proved that the killer was a type of cat. She already knew that they refused to believe it was a native animal because its appearance was not consistent with it being a pony, wild boar or large dog. Officials from the nearby zoo had recently identified pawprints left in mud on the moor as the tracks of a puma, and a 20-second video had just been released which seemed to show big cats roaming nearby.

As she rounded the next bend, thinking about these things, she saw a startlingly large, black feline cross the road with an unhurried, sinuous, fluid movement. Its thick, sinewy shoulders suggested massive strength and speed, like that of engine pistons. As it passed, it turned to stare at her and its great, yellow, black-slitted orbs were caught in the headlights. She noticed its pricked, tufted ears and its short, coarse, raven-black coat before it turned, raising and waving its curved snake of a tail as if making a victory salute. The spectral vision dissolved into the bushes, leaving her with a thumping heart and the feeling that she had witnessed a supernatural manifestation.

A little further along she took a turning with a handwritten sign pointing to 'Gables Farm'. She had to leave the car and cross a rickety, rotting footbridge over a rushing stream. Another battered sign, nailed to a tree, bore the ominous words, ambiguously addressed: 'Wild Big Cats – Keep Out'. A shiny, weather-beaten man with tremendous whiskers and a crusty hat the colour of an over-cooked pie appeared at the farm gate, carrying a rifle. When she explained she was lost and had just had an unnerving experience, he took her into his kitchen and sat her down at a stained oak table while he made tea and talked about the beast.

'You always know when it's about. Rabbits and foxes disappear and birds stop singing. If the ministry people knew anything about country life they'd know it couldn't be a dog. If it's a dog there's noise, and wool and mess everywhere. But a cat goes in to the kill quickly, eats its fill, and slinks off.' The farmer told her that the beast owed him a thousand pounds for dead livestock, and that other farmers had sold their flocks after losing so many sheep. His neighbor had captured the beast on video, along with the tell-tale signs of four long scratch marks on the mauled sheep, and had also found hairs which she'd sent off for analysis, but had received no result.

The farmer continued: 'The only reason to suppress the result would be to avoid panic. Our neighbor got hold of a recording of a puma mating call, and we recognized the scream was real one night. Everyone round here believes in the beast, even though we're skeptical about most things. We haven't got time to waste concocting fantasies.' His parting shot as Nicole thanked him and left was to say, 'We don't want the beast shot, but we do want it acknowledged and kept under control so it doesn't continue to destroy our livelihoods.'

Part 2

Read **Passage B** carefully, and then answer **Question 3** on the Question Paper.

Passage B: Unicorns and Yetis

This passage from a website describes the history of two creatures generally believed to be mythical.

The historical existence of the unicorn is an idea which is easy to accept. Its resemblance to actual animals, such as horses and antelopes, gives it an almost common-sense appeal, and the creature exerts a powerful attraction in numerous popular cultures. The first reports of the unicorn were found in works of ancient Greek history from 2,400 years ago, while eastern cultures recorded details of one-horned animals during the era of Genghis Khan.

Thorough research into contemporary wildlife has not supported the possibility of creatures with the characteristics of a unicorn, but to the present day, sightings of unicorns are reported from Mount Kilimanjaro in Kenya. In 1987, Robert Vavra took an expedition there to find the mythical beast and became famous when he published his sensational diary, complete with photographs, claiming that with the help of Masai warriors he had tracked it down. Many people want to believe him.

The other well-known mythical creature is the yeti. For fifty years the snowy wastes of the Himalayas have beckoned intrepid explorers in search of the mysterious animal also known as 'the abominable snowman'. Occasional sightings of large hairy creatures walking on two legs across the snows or in the forested valleys of Nepal and Tibet have kept the legend alive. Conclusive evidence of the creature's existence has proven elusive, however. The picture of a large, wide footprint, taken by Sir Edmund Hillary in 1951 while climbing Mount Everest, proves nothing.

Since that time a number of yeti 'relics' have turned up. In 1960, western visitors to a Nepalese monastery were astonished to find monks using a 'yeti scalp' in some of their rituals. Analysis of the red hairs, however, showed that they had originated from a mountain goat. A different monastery presented a severed hand, obviously from a primate, as evidence that some kind of ape man was still wandering the mountain fortresses of the Himalayas. The hand could, of course, have come from anywhere – and it vanished in 1991. Finally, there have been rumors, started by travellers, of huge mummified bodies of yeti preserved in even more remote monasteries. These turned out to be fakes, or were no longer where they were supposed to be. However, belief in the existence of the 'wild man of the snows' is still real enough among the locals. What could account for this?

A popular theory among zoologists is that the idea of the yeti is based upon handed-down memories of apes, possibly orang-utans, which may have lived in the mountain forests of this region in the distant past. Some argue that a few of these apes still survive in small numbers, just occasionally spotted crossing a snowfield from one valley to another. Reinhold Messner, one of the world's foremost mountaineers, believes that the legend is based upon a real but little-known animal that inhabited the forests of eastern Tibet. This was the area the Sherpas once lived in before migrating to present-day Nepal, so they may have taken with them their traditional stories.

Messner decided to investigate the yeti for himself, so in 1986 he retraced the Sherpas' migratory route in eastern Tibet. In his book he describes a terrifying night hiking through the forest, haunted by the strange whistling cries of a creature he was later to see. Several times a tall biped with long arms ran across his path. Eventually the creature stood in front of him, raising itself to full height before running off on all fours at incredible speed into the woods. When Messner reached a settlement, he was told by the villagers that he had seen a 'chemo', a Tibetan name for a yeti. This encounter took place in the heart of the area from which the Sherpas had brought their yeti stories, so the large, hairy, ape-like man may just be a Tibetan bear, transformed by Sherpa legend into something more.

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