

MATRICULATION AND SECONDARY EDUCATION CERTIFICATE EXAMINATIONS BOARD
UNIVERSITY OF MALTA, MSIDA

SECONDARY EDUCATION CERTIFICATE LEVEL

SEPTEMBER 2016 SESSION

SUBJECT:	English Language	TOTAL
PAPER NUMBER:	I – Part 2	
DATE:	1 st September 2016	
TIME:	9:00 a.m. to 10:20 a.m.	

LANGUAGE USE

(50 MARKS)

1. Fill in the blanks with one of the following prefixes. Some of them can be used more than once. The first one has been done for you. (5 marks)

il im in ir dis mis un

The benefits of adult colouring were (0) unknown to me until a couple of months ago. Adult colouring is an (1) _____ expensive hobby which is popular right now. Colouring not only makes it possible to (2) _____ lock your creative potential, but also to relieve stress. At school my performance in art was (3) _____ adequate, and this had always (4) _____ couraged me from doing anything artistic. At first I thought I had (5) _____ understood my friend when she said I should buy a colouring book, but after listening in (6) _____ belief to her talking about the advantages of colouring, I decided to give it a try. By focusing on my colouring, I (7) _____ consciously began to feel more relaxed. I now find the activity (8) _____ replaceable as a means of destressing after a hard day, and the satisfaction I get from it is (9) _____ measurable. I don't find it at all (10) _____ logical that adult colouring books are now among the top bestselling books.

2. Fill in the blanks with prepositions. The first one has been done for you. (5 marks)

(5 marks)

I only train (0) for fun, but some of my friends are so immersed (1) _____ their sport that they have become very good (2) _____ it. However, it is having a negative effect (3) _____ them as they are training (4) _____ the point of exhaustion and find it hard to focus (5) _____ their studies. They insist (6) _____ training for at least five hours a day, regardless (7) _____ how much studying they have to do. They have become obsessed (8) _____ winning the next competition and cringe (9) _____ the prospect of losing. I must admit I don't like this extreme attitude (10) _____ sports.

3. Fill in the blanks to form compound words. The first one has been done for you. (5 marks)

Scientists at the University of Edinburgh are really (0) overjoyed about their latest discovery. Dinosaur (1) foot_____ from the biggest creatures to roam Britain have been discovered along the (2) sea_____ on the popular Isle of Skye. Surprisingly, these have previously been (3) over_____ by the thousands of people who visit the area every year. This important discovery is the result of a (4) life_____ search by a renowned scientist at the University, who (5) under_____ a (6) nation_____ search for these dinosaurs 30 years ago. The new site is one of the most (7) extra_____ dinosaur discoveries ever made in Scotland, and is an important (8) break_____ in the study of these creatures which lived over 170 million years ago. To say that the scientist is ecstatic about this (9) out_____ discovery is an (10) under_____!

4. Replace the words in bold with the idioms below by inserting the correct letter in each gap. Use each idiom ONLY ONCE. The first one has been done for you. (5 marks)

- | | | |
|--|--|--------------------------------------|
| A <i>let the cat out of the bag</i> | B <i>burn the candle at both ends</i> | C <i>in the driver's seat</i> |
| D <i>throw a wet blanket over</i> | E <i>leave no stone unturned</i> | F <i>dog eat dog</i> |
| G <i>keep her eye on the ball</i> | H <i>push came to shove</i> | I <i>throw in the towel</i> |
| J <i>got all her ducks in a row</i> | K racked her brains | |

Joanne (0) **thought hard** [K] until she came up with a good plan to take over the company. She didn't want to (1) **reveal her idea** [___] until she was sure she had (2) **made all the necessary preparations** [___]. She was determined to (3) **try everything** [___] to make her plan work and knew she really had to (4) **concentrate** [___] to succeed. It would not be easy because it is (5) **very competitive** [___] in the real world, but Joanne was not going to let anything (6) **upset** [___] her plans. She knew that if (7) **things got a little difficult** [___], her family would support her. She would have to (8) **work really hard** [___] but eventually she would be (9) **in charge of the company** [___]. She would never (10) **give up** [___]!

5. Complete the following passage by forming ONE word from the one in brackets. The first one has been done for you. (5 marks)

(0) *Researchers* (**search**) are now 90 percent sure there is a hidden chamber behind the tomb of King Tutankhamen. According to Nicholas Reeves' (1)_____ (**find**), there are two secret doorways that have gone (2)_____ (**touch**) since the King's burial. One of these might lead to the (3)_____ (**bury**) site of Queen Nefertiti, and (4)_____ (**confirm**) of this is expected to shed fresh light on a rather (5)_____ (**mystery**) period of Egyptian history that has so far remained unexplored. This (6)_____ (**discover**) would be the most (7)_____ (**mark**) Egyptian (8)_____ (**archaeology**) find for a long time. Excitingly, the (9)_____ (**indicate**) so far are that there is definitely something waiting to be (10)_____ (**cover**) behind King Tutankhamen's tomb!

6. Fill in each blank with ONE word which is the opposite of the word in brackets, and which best fits the context. The first one has been done for you. (5 marks)

Assuming you are not (0) *afraid* (**fearless**) of spiders, you might well admire the (1)_____ (**simple**) webs that spiders weave to (2)_____ (**release**) their prey. (3)_____ (**Similar**) spiders use various weaving methods, but the one which is the most (4)_____ (**strange**) to us is the orb web. The spider, (5)_____ (**rarely**) known as the golden orb weaver, can (6)_____ (**demolish**) a (7)_____ (**broken**) web that can span from one river bank to another. These webs are made up of a combination of (8)_____ (**weakness**) and toughness and become rather (9)_____ (**obscure**) when dew highlights their silken lines. In (10)_____ (**colder**) regions of the world, both spiders and webs can be bigger.

7. Fill in each blank with ONE suitable word. The first one has been done for you. (5 marks)

'Lucy' was a young woman who (0) *lived* in Ethiopia 3.2 million years (1)_____. She is now just a collection of fossilised (2)_____. Lucy was (3)_____ in 1974 and was (4)_____ after a song by The Beatles. Lucy lies hidden away from the (5)_____ in a specially (6)_____ safe in the National Museum of Ethiopia. Only plaster (7)_____ of her (8)_____ can be seen. Lucy died as a young but fully (9)_____ adult, but no one (10)_____ how she died.

8. Fill in the blanks with the correct form of the verb in brackets. The first one has been done for you. (10 marks)

More than 2,000 seals (0) *have been spotted* in the River Thames over the past decade, according to an important survey that (1)_____ (**run**) from 2004 to 2014, and (2)_____ (**publish**) in August 2015. Even though nowadays other problems (3)_____ (**threaten**) the health of the river and its animals, that's a big change for a river that was so polluted that not even fish (4)_____ (**can**) survive in it. Since the late 1960s, when London's sewage system gradually improved, the river (5)_____ (**begin**) to breathe again. Before that, in 1957, the Natural History Museum (6)_____ (**declare**) the Thames biologically dead. Until now, the sewage problem (7)_____ (**not solve**) completely. Heavy rainfall (8)_____ (**overburden**) London's sewers, and the excess is discharged into the river. It is hoped that the planned Thames Tideway Tunnel (9)_____ (**provide**) relief. Construction is set (10)_____ (**start**) in 2017. □

9. Complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first one as in the example. (5 marks)

0. I have never visited this city before.

This is *the first time I am visiting this city.*

1. I prefer staying in the city centre to the outskirts.

I'd rather _____
_____.

2. It took me two hours to find a good hotel.

I spent _____
_____.

3. It was silly of me not to book a hotel before I came.

I wish _____
_____.

4. "Why don't you take the city tour?" the receptionist said.

The receptionist suggested _____
_____.

5. The city was fantastic!

What _____
_____!



MATRICULATION AND SECONDARY EDUCATION CERTIFICATE EXAMINATIONS BOARD
UNIVERSITY OF MALTA, MSIDA**SECONDARY EDUCATION CERTIFICATE LEVEL****SEPTEMBER 2016 SESSION**

SUBJECT:	English Language
PAPER NUMBER:	IIB – Question 1
DATE:	1 st September 2016
TIME:	4:00 p.m. to 6:05 p.m.

WRITING TASK**(40 MARKS)**

Write between 180 and 200 words on ONE of the following tasks:

You are advised to:

- pay attention to layout, paragraphing, vocabulary, grammar, spelling and punctuation;
- keep your writing to the number of words indicated. You will be penalised if you write less than 180 or more than 200 words.

1. Write a short story beginning with the following words: ‘It was the perfect day until ...’
2. For most young people, staying at home can be more fun than going out. Discuss.
3. You are at the beach and a storm suddenly breaks out. Describe your thoughts and feelings, the sudden change in weather and what you see and hear people around you doing.

MATRICULATION AND SECONDARY EDUCATION CERTIFICATE EXAMINATIONS BOARD
UNIVERSITY OF MALTA, MSIDA

SECONDARY EDUCATION CERTIFICATE LEVEL

SEPTEMBER 2016 SESSION

SUBJECT:	English Language	TOTAL
PAPER NUMBER:	IIB – Question 2	
DATE:	1 st September 2016	
TIME:	4:00 p.m. to 6:05 p.m.	

READING COMPREHENSION AND SUMMARY

(50 MARKS)

PASSAGE 1

Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions that follow.

(25 marks)

For those with vivid imaginations, the white markings on the black back of a noble false widow spider can look like a skull and crossbones, or in other cases just a skull. Perhaps **they** are a warning that the spider has a nasty bite. The poison will not be fatal, however; rather on a par with being stung by a wasp.

- 5 The species is one of six similar spider varieties found in Britain, but is not native, having accidentally arrived in 1879 in a bunch of bananas from Madeira. After more than a century of being confined to the far southwest, **it** is now spreading northwards as the climate warms. Noble false widows tend to live in houses, round the back of washing machines being a favourite, presumably because of the warmth.

- 10 Other false widow varieties, with common names like “cupboard spider” and “rabbit hutch spider”, rather give away their preferred habitats. They too tend to like warm and dry conditions, which in Britain means being close to people.

- 15 These spiders are in truth rather docile and slow-moving, and tend to live inside their rather dense square webs feeding off the insects that stray into their path. They will not go out of their way to bite but handling them is not advisable and, if you know they are about in your neighbourhood, a quick check in a long unused pair of shoes might be advisable in case **you** step on **one**.

The spiders are not very noticeable, about the size of a small fingernail, not like the large hairy scuttling kind that tend to be found in baths. Their legs are red to brown and the white markings on the back, which are clearer in males, are pentagon-shaped. They like the top corners of rooms and conservatories, as well as warm spots behind radiators and kitchen equipment.

- 20 Females can live for years, and survive for months without water, but males live for only one summer and autumn and **they** disappear after breeding.

The eggs hatch in two to four months and the tiny spiders can sail away on the wind on ballooning silk threads, hence their ability to spread rapidly.

25

The bite can be very painful, worse in some cases than a bee sting, and **it** lasts for between one and 12 hours. About a third of bites also produce nausea and lethargy. Although each year a number of people in Britain die as a result of bee and wasp stings, no one has yet been recorded as dying from a noble false widow bite.

If you spot the spiders in your home, and they are unwelcome, the Natural History Museum advises not handling them and buying a spider catcher so they can be safely released a long way from the house.

QUESTIONS ON PASSAGE 1

1. Write down a part-sentence of **not more than three words**, found between lines 1 and 4 of the passage, that shows that there is no skull or skull and crossbones on the back of the noble false widow spider. (1 mark)

.....

2. Write down **two** consecutive words, found between lines 1 and 8, that show that the noble false widow spider did not originate in the UK. (1 mark)

.....

3. Are the following statements **True** or **False**? Circle the correct answer and give a reason for each of your answers. (4 marks)

(i) The noble false widow spider was intentionally brought to the UK in 1879.
(True/False) because.....

(ii) There are various types of false widow spiders.
(True/False) because.....

(iii) Baby false widow spiders tend to move very fast.
(True/False) because.....

(iv) The sting of a false widow spider is exactly the same as that of a bee.
(True/False) because.....

4. Write down **four** part-sentences that indicate that false widow spiders are not very dangerous.

(2 marks)

(i)

(ii)

(iii)

(iv)

5. List **six** places in the home, as mentioned in the passage, where false widow spiders may be found.

(3 marks)

(i)

(ii)

(iii)

(iv)

(v)

(vi)

6. Between lines 5 and 27 find **single** words that match the following meanings as used in the text:

(3 marks)

(i) restricted.....

(ii) natural environments.....

(iii) drift.....

(iv) recommended.....

(v) rooms with glass roofs and walls.....

(vi) a lack of energy.....

7. What **two** pieces of advice does the writer give to those who find false widow spiders at home? (1 mark)

(i)

(ii)

8. What do the following words refer to in the passage? (3 marks)

(i) they (line 2) (ii) it (line 7)

(iii) you (line 15) (iv) one (line 15)

(v) they (line 21) (vi) it (line 24)

9. In a paragraph **of not less than 30 and not more than 40 words**, describe the appearance of the false widow spider. **Use your own words.** (7 marks)

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Passage 1

PASSAGE 2

Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions that follow.

(25 marks)

5 Getting to the top of Mount Fuji in Japan involves a tough walk. From the train station at Kawaguchiko, it's the normal option to take a bus to where the road ends and begin the walk from there. The suggested walking time to the summit is six hours. There's no entrance fee for the park, but you do get a small yellow map and a leaflet pointing out how easy it is to become disorientated since the treeless landscape all looks the same. I didn't pay much attention to this.

All non-essential stuff – which meant everything except clothes – was left in a locker. I set off at 4 p.m. It was a promising start. Three hours in and the six-hour target looked generous. The sun had dipped and the ant line of walkers thinned.

10 An hour later and the mountain was blanketed in darkness. I was now wearing every piece of clothing I had as the temperature plummeted to near zero. I'd decided that I would put to use my redundant sleeping bag and walk to the top of the mountain that night to be at the summit alone in the morning.

15 With a makeshift stick and towel for a scarf, I started walking and I was soon completely alone. I walked for an hour noticing that the summit was obviously much further than I'd thought. Then came a threatening drip, followed by an ominous drop. I put on my raincoat and decided to make a dash to the top.

But then, as suddenly as the rain had begun, it stopped again. Yet actually the rain hadn't stopped. I'd simply climbed above the cloud layer as I approached the crater lip.

20 Up ahead I saw a wooden hut. It was bare inside except for a bucket and mop and a small bench. There were gaps between the planks and the door flapped on its hinges. It was sheltered, though, and I hung up my wet clothes, sat down on the bench and started writing my journal for the day. It was 10 p.m., exactly six hours since I'd got off the bus.

Finally, I climbed into my fake but extremely warm sleeping bag, which I'd picked up in India, and settled down as best I could. I slept in fits and bursts, waking up regularly and listening to noises outside.

25 Two hours later the sky was turning a milky blue and the ant line of people had resumed its meandering to the top. An hour more and I'd walked the track leading around the crater. The sun rose, the mist burnt away and I could see once again Fuji's shadow stretching out across the clouds below.

At least I'd achieved that bit of solitude that gives pleasure to a mountain experience – something not enjoyed by most of Fuji's visitors.

30 Exhausted, I found the track and started back down. But then when I reached into my pocket for the little yellow map I realised what I'd done: I'd just walked down the wrong side of the mountain. I sat on a rock and looked back at Fuji towering above me. It was a reminder to always read the instructions – something I would sing step by step over the next nine hours.

QUESTIONS ON PASSAGE 2

1a. Where is this passage most likely taken from? Underline the most appropriate answer. (1 mark)

- (i) A travel magazine (ii) A geography textbook (iii) A holiday brochure

1b. Give a reason for your answer. (1 mark)

2. What does the writer mean by *the six-hour target looked generous* (line 7)? (2 marks)

3. Write down a part-sentence **of not more than 4 words**, found between lines 1 and 11, that shows that a lot of people were walking up the mountain. (1 mark)

4. What does the writer mean by *redundant sleeping bag* (lines 10-11)? (2 marks)

5. List **four** items the writer was carrying as she walked up Mount Fuji. (2 marks)

- (i) (ii)
(iii) (iv)

6. Explain the meaning of *a threatening drip, followed by an ominous drop* (lines 13-14). (2 marks)

7. Why does the writer say *Yet actually the rain hadn't stopped* (line 16)? (1 mark)

8. Write **two** part-sentences, **of not more than four words each**, that show that the writer did not sleep very well. (1 mark)

(i) (ii)

9. Which **three** things did the writer appreciate about the wooden hut? (3 marks)

(i)
(ii)
(iii)

10. What does *meandering* (line 25) suggest about the way the people walked? (2 marks)

.....
.....

11. List **six** facts about Mount Fuji that we learn from the passage. (3 marks)

(i)
(ii)
(iii)
(iv)
(v)
(vi)

12. *I didn't pay much attention to this* (line 5). What was the consequence of this? (2 marks)

.....

13. What **two** things would the writer be doing *over the next nine hours* (line 33)? (2 marks)

(i)
(ii)

Passage 2

WRITING TASK

(10 MARKS)

You are Ben. Jes, a friend of yours, has asked you to join her mountain hiking this coming December. Write a short email to her, **of between 50-60 words**, in which you turn down her invitation, giving reasons for your answer. **You will be penalised if you write less than 50 or more than 60 words.**

From	benborg17@kmail.com
To	jesfar16@rmail.com
Subject	mountain hiking

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Writing

