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**CARIBBEAN EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL**

**SECONDARY EDUCATION CERTIFICATE  
EXAMINATION**

**ENGLISH A**

**Paper 02 – General Proficiency**

*2 hours 40 minutes*

**17 MAY 2012 (a.m.)**

**READ THE FOLLOWING INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY.**

1. Section A consists of **ONE** question. You **MUST** answer this question.
2. Section B consists of **TWO** questions. You **MUST** answer both questions from this section.
3. Section C consists of **THREE** questions. You **MUST** answer **ONE** question from this section.
4. Section D consists of **TWO** questions. You **MUST** answer **ONE** question from this section.
5. You are advised to take some time to read through the paper and plan your answers.

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01218020/F 2012

## SECTION A

(Suggested time: 35 minutes)

You **MUST** answer the question in this section.

1. **Read the following extract on the features and consequences of modern living carefully and then write a summary of it in 120 words. Your summary MUST be in continuous prose, in paragraph form, and as far as possible in your own words. If you exceed the word limit, only the first 120 words of your answer will be read and assessed.**

I wonder how many of us are fully aware of just how socially and culturally toxic our environments have become as we race to embrace the hype of modern living. This usually means living in the ever present by keeping up-to-date with the latest consumer brands or lifestyles. We think we are buying not only a quality product, but also an image that we believe can magically transform us into better persons.

A common symptom of the modern lifestyle is the highly individualistic and materialistic personality. Individualistic and materialistic people usually oppose any call to be socially responsible, and live by the mantra “every man for himself”. They are insensitive to the welfare of others and some will not hesitate to maim or kill, directly or indirectly, in order to achieve their desired material status and power. For them, human lives, including friends and associates, are seen as products. They are enjoyed for the moment and are easily disposable.

The real cost of modern living makes it unsustainable. It has a heavy price which includes the spread of poverty, environmental pollution, chronic diseases caused by unhealthy lifestyle choices, and social chaos resulting in crime and violence. These outweigh the alleged benefits. In the end, the heavy burden, the fall-out and casualties, will fall on our fragile economies and on our young people, our future.

Now is the time to revisit our development priorities if we seek to survive. Let us look at education, for example. Our education system will continue to fail the masses because its mission is not to develop the whole person. If you asked most people why education is important, a typical response would probably be “to equip us to earn a living”. Earning a living usually means that the primary motive for being educated is to make money. Hence, we cannot be surprised by those people who place little value on education, and instead seek illegal ways to “earn a living”. What is lacking is an education that teaches us “how to live” while earning a living. Unfortunately, too many of us put money at the centre of happiness.

Fortunately, some of us ordinary folks are awakening from our self-imposed suffering in modern living. Some have become advocates for a more humanitarian approach to life — a journey our “education system” should have taken us on a long time ago. The old saying, “Each one, teach one” is certainly the way to go.

*Dekenu Shepherd, “The Real Cost of Modern Living”. Next Generation: Empowering the Caribbean Family, Issue No. 2, June–September 2010, p. 5.*

**(30 marks)**

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**SECTION B**

**(Suggested time: 40 minutes)**

**Answer ALL questions in this section.**

- 2. Read the following extract carefully and then answer ALL the questions that follow.**

5 A red blur covered his eyes as he ran. But halfway down the block a sharp pain under his rib cage stopped him. He doubled up and leaned against a tree. He waited for the pain to pass but it only grew sharper. His breath pushed out of his lungs in painful spurts. He could feel the pulse beat at his temples. Sweat broke out through his pores, wetting his shirt, which clung to him. With difficulty he unbuttoned his shirt so that the breeze found his bare chest. He waited. Minutes went by. A bird chirped in a tree. He heard the flow of cars on the street behind him. The red blur lifted; his breath eased. At last the pain stopped.

10 Imamu looked over the darkening, tree-lined street. What was he doing here in this strange land, far away from New York? Far from everything he had ever known? A stranger on foreign turf. Brooklyn. He bit his lips to keep down the tears. What had he been doing in that house, with those people? What did they have to do with him? The tears kept pushing up. To stop them he hissed loudly to the tree, "What the hell was that chick talking about, anyway?"

Imamu flattened himself against the trunk of the tree and closed his eyes, glad that the leaves on the branches bowing over him were full enough to screen him from passers-by.

15 Slowly he let the scene at the dinner table replay through his mind. He saw Mrs Ainsley, playing for time so that he could get to know the family — and they could get to know him. Mr Ainsley, trying to try. Perk, with her round face and gummy smile. He looked long at her face. He saw her bright eyes flashing her intention of being Perk, of being smart, open, letting her thoughts hang out. He sort of liked her: liked the fact that she didn't keep anything hidden  
20 — unlike Gail.

*Rosa Guy, The Disappearance, Penguin Books Limited, 1979, p. 38.*

- (a) What caused Imamu to stop running? **(1 mark)**
- (b) What effect does the writer achieve in paragraph 1 by using short sentences? **(2 marks)**
- (c) Which sentence in paragraph 1 indicates a contrast between what Imamu is feeling and the atmosphere of the natural environment? **(2 marks)**
- (d) Apart from the short sentence, what literary technique does the writer use in paragraph 2 to show that Imamu is reflecting on his experiences? **(2 marks)**
- (e) (i) Identify ONE emotion which Imamu experiences in paragraph 2.
- (ii) Quote an appropriate expression to support your answer. **(2 marks)**
- (f) Why does Imamu ask himself several questions and replay the scene at the dinner in his mind? **(2 marks)**
- (g) Quote the sentence which indicates that Imamu thinks he understands Perk. **(2 marks)**
- (h) Why was Imamu running away? **(2 marks)**

**Total 15 marks**

3. **Read the following extract carefully and then answer ALL the questions that follow.**

Retirement planning is also known as financial planning. It is a relatively young discipline, considering that in the 1930s, programmes which prepare persons financially for retirement: pension, social security and national insurance, were unheard of in the region.

5 For many people, retirement means a time of luxury and opportunity to travel; for others it means the need to continue working to gain the income to meet ordinary needs. Most people, though, see it as a vibrant and significant time of life which may be a period of thirty or more years, given that our populations are now living longer, thanks to medical science.

10 Most young persons make the fundamental error of shortening their accumulation period for retirement income. They postpone setting aside a fixed amount of money monthly, focusing only on other responsibilities like buying a house, a car, and paying for education.

Income for retirement comes from three sources: social security, employer-sponsored pension benefits, and personal savings. The reality is that when one reaches retirement, one's income is significantly less, perhaps by as much as 70%. Therefore, in planning we should consider if it is possible to survive on a reduced income.

15 There are some roadblocks to accumulating retirement savings. One of these is the practice of spending all of one's after-tax income on current consumption to maintain a standard of living. This will lead to an absence of savings. Another roadblock is the unexpected expenditure, like emergency medical bills, and at times, even the cost of items such as appliances, house repairs and automotive repair bills.

20 Perhaps the greatest impediment to having adequate retirement is financial literacy. Great apathy and ignorance are shown by many persons, young and old alike, when information is being shared. Retirement does not have to be a time of hardship if you learn to plan, and plan early.

*Adapted from Kammie Holder, "Planning for Retirement".  
The Weekend Nation, July 2, 2010, p. 10.*

- (a) Why does the writer state that retirement planning is a young discipline? (1 mark)
- (b) Identify TWO programmes mentioned by the writer that are used to prepare for retirement. (2 marks)
- (c) What does the writer see as the error young people make in planning for retirement? (2 marks)
- (d) What does the word “roadblock” (line 17) mean as used in the passage? (2 marks)
- (e) Name TWO of the roadblocks to retirement savings which the writer identifies. (2 marks)
- (f) What point does the writer make about financial literacy in the final paragraph? (2 marks)
- (g) According to the final paragraph, what does the writer see as being essential to successful retirement? (2 marks)
- (h) Quote an expression from paragraph 2 which is opposite in meaning to the final sentence in the extract. (2 marks)

**Total 15 marks**

**SECTION C**

**(Suggested time: 45 minutes)**

**Answer ONE question from this section.**

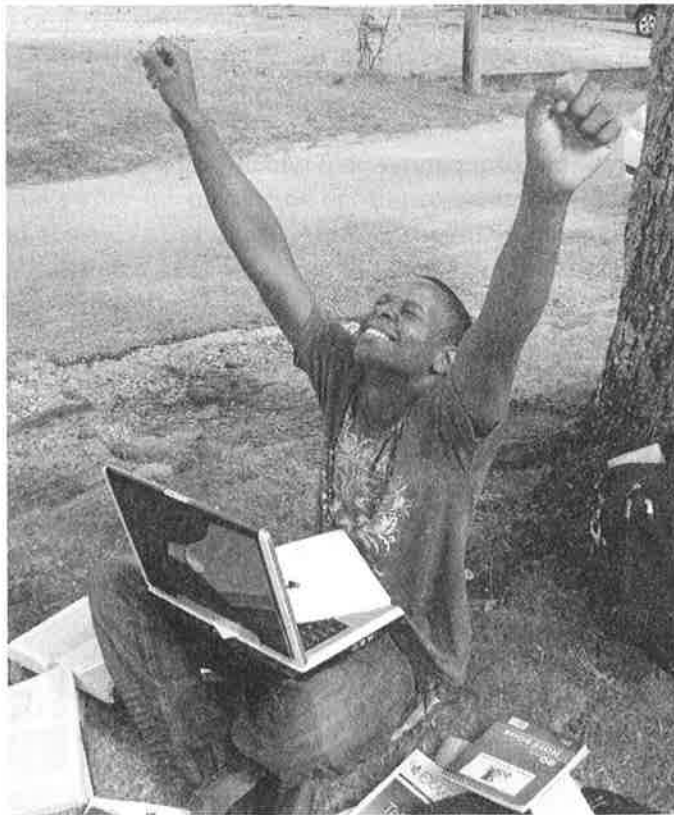
**Your answer in this section should be approximately 400–500 words in length.**

**You MUST write in Standard English. However, dialect may be used in conversation.**

**EITHER**

**SHORT STORY**

4. Write a story based on the picture below.



**(35 marks)**

**OR**

5. My people were special to me. I had to warn them that a storm, such as they had never seen, was coming.

Write a story beginning with this sentence.

**(35 marks)**

**GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE**

**OR**

**DESCRIPTION**

6. The district we came upon was more than unusual. Was it real or science fiction? I struggled to see and appreciate everything; a mixture of feelings bubbled inside.

Describe what the narrator saw and felt.

**(35 marks)**

**SECTION D**

**(Suggested time: 30 minutes)**

**Answer ONE question from this section.**

**Your answer in this section should be approximately 200–300 words in length.**

**You MUST write in Standard English.**

**EITHER**

7. Speaker A The government should cut subjects like Music and Visual Arts from the curriculum to save money in these hard economic times.

Speaker B No way! I think the government should find other ways to solve economic problems!

Write an essay supporting the views of **EITHER** speaker A **OR** speaker B.

**(35 marks)**

**OR**

8. Education is the only avenue for success in today's world.

Write an essay giving your views on this statement.

**(35 marks)**

**END OF TEST**

**IF YOU FINISH BEFORE TIME IS CALLED, CHECK YOUR WORK ON THIS TEST.**

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