EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL OF ESWATINI
Eswatini General Certificate of Secondary Education

CANDIDATE NAME									
CENTRE NUMBER						CANDIDATE NUMBER			

ENGLISH LANGUAGE **6873/01**

Paper 1 Reading and Directed Writing **October/November 2025**

2 hours

Candidates answer on the Question Paper.

No Additional Materials are required.

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

Write your name, centre number and candidate number in the spaces provided.
Write in **dark blue** or **black** pen.
Do **not** use staples, paper clips, highlighters, glue or correction fluid.

Answer **all** questions.
Dictionaries are **not** allowed.

The number of marks is given in brackets [ ] at the end of each question or part question.

For Examiner's Use	
Exercise 1	
Exercise 2	
Exercise 3	
Exercise 4	
Exercise 5	
Total	

This document consists of **11** printed pages and **1** blank page.

Exercise 1

Read the following passage titled 'Cats' and answer the questions that follow.

CATS

Have you ever decided to get your cat a companion because you felt it was unhappy or lonely? Has an introduction of a cat to your family ended less amicably? If that is the case, then there is something you need to learn about your pets. Cat behaviour is very different from dog behaviour – and understanding a dog's needs does not mean that you understand your cat's. Cats, unlike dogs or any other domestic animals, are known to be happier on their own.

Generally, all animals are either social or loners. Felines, except for lions which operate in prides, are loners. A domestic cat is only a wild cat in disguise as it is self-sufficient and territorial. Most can go out and hunt for themselves without needing much else in their lives. What they struggle with most is a change in their environment and territory. If a family member is gone, be it a dog, human or another cat they grew up with, your cat needs to re-adjust to its territory. It can take a little time – just leave it alone. You should not bring a new cat into the house as a solution, as the cat you already have will not want to share its territory.

It should be remembered that cats are comfort-seeking physical creatures. While it may sit on your lap, that is more likely because it is comfortable and not because it loves you. However, it is possible to enforce better behaviour in your cat. Knowing which breed of cat best suits your home life is the most important thing before going through with a purchase or adoption. The reason there are fancy breeds is that they have had a certain amount of 'wild cat' bred out, making them far more companionable. Feral cats are far more likely to have wilder cat characteristics. So, if you want a real lap-sitter, you have to get a certain breed, whereas if you want a cat that is more playful, you need to get another breed.

Once you have bought or adopted a cat, it is important that there is a successful relationship between it and the rest of the household. This can be done by getting a kitten instead of a fully-grown cat, because a kitten has an open mind, and this is a great time to start the training process. If the behaviour patterns are successfully reinforced, they will continue. A kitten can be conditioned to be handled all over, obviously in small bits, so that it never feels unpleasant. This can also allow it to integrate with the family properly and feel pleasant around the house.

Cats are hunting animals, so their food should not be readily available all day. It is helpful to maximise their prey drive before feeding, with interactive hunting toys. By making their mealtime a game, this gives them a positive outlet for their high level of energy. Kittens can be trained not to tamper with their litter box by changing it at least twice a week. The litter box must be placed in low activity areas, and it should be covered.

Being creatures of great exploration, they are superior and self-sufficient, hence the need for an open space so they can explore freely. They need to have elevated spaces for them to feel comfortable and safe. Since scratching is a natural behaviour for cats, they will need a sturdy scratching post in their spaces. Cats also have long lives, and it is imperative that one does their homework on the breed and should not buy impulsively. You cannot afford not to do your homework because the cat will suffer. In most cases, a change in your cat's behaviour can either be environmental or medical. If the cat's behaviour has changed and your vet has confirmed that there is nothing wrong with it medically, the change in behaviour can be assumed to be environmentally-triggered.

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(a) What difference is there between cats and other pets?

..... [1]

(b) What does the writer think is most frustrating for cats?

..... [1]

(c) How can you help a cat cope with the absence of a family member?

..... [1]

(d) What **trait** does a cat display by sitting on one's lap?

..... [1]

(e) Explain the following words as used in the passage:

(i) 'self-sufficient' (paragraph 2)

..... [1]

(ii) 'enforce' (paragraph 3)

..... [1]

(f) Compare fancy cats to feral cats.

.....

..... [2]

(g) What is the benefit of training your cat to be handled?

..... [1]

(h) How can a cat owner enhance the cat's hunting behaviour?

..... [1]

(i) Give **four** pieces of advice from the passage to help new cat owners make sure their home is a suitable environment for a cat.

(i) .....

(ii) .....

(iii) .....

(iv) ..... [4]

[Total: 14 marks]

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[Turn over

Exercise 2

Read the following article on growing your own food then complete the notes on the opposite page.

HEALTHY HABITS FOR THE SOIL AND SOUL

The luxury of a purely decorative garden may soon be a thing of the past. For many, plants now need to be productive in some way if they are to earn their place in the ground. There are many good reasons for growing your own food, including to be aware of what you are putting in your body. The gardener is engaged in a pleasurable task that gets him outside to work towards improving his environment.

One thing a kitchen garden just cannot do without though, is good, clean water – a commodity that is becoming scarcer in the world. It has been projected that by the year 2030, the demand for water will outstrip supply by at least 17 percent. Therefore, it makes sense for all of us to be involved in what, until recently, has been seen as only a 'fashionable' thing to do: create our own food.

Healthy soil is the first place to start when it comes to providing your plants with the nutrients and water they need so that you get the best out of them. Well-nourished, well-composted and properly mulched soil is the foundation of a garden that will help your plants to tolerate drought. Adding organic matter to the soil will help it retain moisture, conserve water, and save you effort. There are so many water-retention solutions for your soil nowadays. However, even these will not help if you have not put down a thick carpet of mulch to reduce evaporation and run-off. Moreover, this will prevent weeds from growing and competing with your vegetables.

Some people may wonder if grey water can be used for your edible plants. Sure, soapy water may be good for keeping aphids at bay, but would you be keen to put it over the food you are going to be putting in your body? Obviously, there is no problem with using the water from the kitchen with which you would have cleaned fruit and vegetables, but oily or greasy water is a no-no.

The best time to plant is during the rainy season, so that your plants can have the time and opportunity to ground themselves before the hot, dry weather arrives. From there, how much you water and irrigate your plants is crucial. The water needs to get to the root zone (about 25–30 cm down).

All too often, gardeners tend to overwater. A sprinkler uses more water as compared to drip irrigation, which gets the water to where it needs to go without any run-off, and it reduces water consumption. If you have made sure that the soil has been watered properly, you can easily go two to seven days between watering. So, no more running around the garden with a hosepipe, creating puddles.

The location of your vegetable garden is also crucial. It obviously needs to be in a spot where it will get full sunlight for much of the day to support plant growth. To cut down on watering, your garden also has to be on no more than a gentle slope to avoid surface water run-off.

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You are an agriculturalist. You are going to give a lecture on gardening to members of the community.

Use the information in the article to make short notes under each heading as a basis for your lecture.

Advantages of growing your own food

- ..... [1]
- ..... [1]
- ..... [1]

Conditions for gardening

- ..... [1]
- ..... [1]
- ..... [1]

How to water plants

- ..... [1]
- ..... [1]

[Total: 8 marks]

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[Turn over

Exercise 3

Read the following article about female authors and then answer the questions that follow.

A Mbali Maseko

South African singer and songwriter, former radio presenter and novelist, Mbali Maseko had her first novel published in 2016. To date, she has published a total of seven books. If you haven't read any of her novels yet, *Ghosts* (published in 2018) is a great place to start. It is a collection of short stories about mermaids in Soweto, vampires, werewolves and cunning women. When one thinks of African authors, especially South African ones, the thoughts of colonisation, culture, loss and trauma come to mind. So, seeing an African author not talk about these kinds of topics, and dive into the supernatural sci-fi genre, with an African twist, is enlightening and shows that not all African authors have to be put in a box.

B Zaza Ngidi

Inspired by the likes of Nella Larsen, Octavia E. Butler, Toni Morrison and Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, 30-year-old Zaza Ngidi's debut book, *The Girl Next Door*, will keep you on the edge of your seat. It is a book that everyone should read but will resonate especially with those who have ever felt marginalised and overlooked in the workplace. It was named the most-anticipated book of 2021 by Weekly Magazine, The Post, and Trends. It is also already in the process of being adapted into a series produced by Village Clique. The book follows an editorial assistant named Paula as she navigates being the only black employee at her work and how her life changes when a Hillbrow-born employee starts working alongside her. The book tackles issues of diversity in the workplace, systematic racism and embracing your hair.

C Vera Brown

Swati activist Vera Brown is young and outspoken about climate change. In her debut book *The Forrester*, she advocates for including African voices and communities in the debates around climate change. After witnessing some of these issues first hand: devastating flooding, deforestation, extinction and starvation, Vera was triggered. She saw how the world's biggest polluters are asleep on the wheel, ignoring the Global South where the effects of climate injustice are most fiercely felt. Inspired by a shared vision of hope, Vera's commanding political voice demands attention for the biggest issue of our time, and in this rousing manifesto for change, mobilises the masses to take action to protect our planet now and for the future.

D Jojo Henwood

If you are a fan of Sally Rooney and Zadie Smith, 25-year-old, London-born author Jojo Henwood's debut novel *Crossroads* will be a book that you will thoroughly enjoy. *Crossroads* follows a young woman struggling to afford her own apartment and her journey through the many places she has to stay in during the year. Although she has three degrees, she has yet to have a stable job and a place to call her own, something that many millennials are currently facing. Henwood, a millennial herself, who has already achieved great success, comes from a personal place of understanding, which can be seen through her writing. She has gone through a similar situation of feeling lost in this world and angry with how the economy has set young people up currently. In that case, one will resonate strongly with this book.

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The questions below are about the female authors, A–D.

For each question, write the correct letter A, B, C, or D on the space provided.

(a) Which author's book talks about being disadvantaged where they worked? ..... [1]

(b) Which author's career is multi-faceted? ..... [1]

(c) Which author talks about the same experiences as the new generation? ..... [1]

(d) Which author's book was eagerly waited for? ..... [1]

(e) Which author is highly involved in environmental affairs? ..... [1]

(f) Which author has broken the boundaries in her writing career? ..... [1]

(g) Which author addresses discontent about the current situation in the world? ..... [1]

(h) Which author is calling for people to join her advocacy? ..... [1]

[Total: 8 marks]

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[Turn over

Exercise 4

Read the following article by Susan Grey, an actor and author, and answer the questions on the opposite page.

NEVER TOO OLD TO BE HAPPY

I was raised not to let others down, 'to pull myself together' and have 'a stiff upper lip'. My dad was a bar owner, a job meant to be relentlessly jolly. Despite having had TB and coped with relative poverty, if a customer asked how he was feeling, he would reply, 'mustn't grumble'. I think now, why not be happy?

At 89, I definitely have not learnt the seemingly mandatory satisfaction of advanced years. Satisfaction isn't a goal I seek because there is so much to be angry about in the world. There are so many injustices, such as widespread poverty alongside excessive wealth and waste. Above all, for someone old, it is painful to see dangerous patterns of the past recurring. We seem not to learn from our mistakes.

As a child, I did my school lessons and slept in an air-raid shelter, while bombs exploded, and havoc went on outside. I see it happening again. The threat of war. My dad didn't spare me the tragedy of war, showing me pictures of the horrors of the Belsen concentration camp and telling me this must not happen again, and it was down to me. His words have troubled me all my life. A driven sense of duty to right wrongs.

It has never been more important to be united, yet we are divided and fragmented. Many of the liberal values my parents and I fought for are ridiculed, and we are seen as 'snowflakes'. A like-minded friend suggested we're old people who moan about how life was when we were young instead of embracing change, but, as I have pointed out, for me it wasn't the case. War was vile, and poverty was grinding.

During the war, Princess Elizabeth and her sister, Margaret Rose, sent messages on the radio to us frightened children. When I was informed that she, now a queen, had agreed that I should be offered the damehood title, I was astonished, worried, felt unsuitable and unworthy. I felt I should turn it down. In the end, I succumbed to my love for ritual and took my grandson to Windsor Castle for the ceremony. Prince William confessed that he was a little nervous, as the pandemic had meant he hadn't taken part in the ceremony for two years. However, it was a beautiful day.

When I feel depressed about the state of the world, I now remind myself that many young people I know are avid for change. #MeToo, #BlackLivesMatter and Saving the Planet are just some of the campaigns they are passionately engaged in to make the world a better place. I put my faith in them.

Although a city lover, I find pleasure in nature. When I am at my home in France, I watch the dawn from my bedroom window and enjoy the feeling of the sun coming through the window. This lifts my spirits and soothes my rheumatic joints. As I sit here now, butterflies are dancing around a flower, and I am having a nice cup of tea. All together now, I am happy. I choose to be happy.

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(a) What are the contrasting issues that the writer is angry about?

.....

..... [2]

(b) Give a phrase from the passage that shows that history is repeating itself.

..... [1]

(c) Explain the following expressions:

(i) 'A driven sense of duty to right wrongs.' (paragraph 3)

.....

..... [2]

(ii) 'War was vile, and poverty was grinding.' (paragraph 4)

.....

..... [2]

(d) What was the ceremony at Windsor Castle for?

..... [1]

(e) How does the writer lift herself up when she feels down? Give **two** details.

(i) ..... [1]

(ii) ..... [1]

[Total: 10 marks]

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[Turn over

Exercise 5

Read the following passage on the darker side of the fashion industry. On the opposite page, write a summary of the disadvantages of fashion and how consumers can stop this phenomenon. You should use your own words as far as possible.

Your summary should be about 100 words (and not more than 120 words). You will receive up to 6 marks for the content of your summary and up to 4 marks for the accuracy and style of your language.

THE DARKER SIDE OF FASHION

A darker side of the fashion industry is currently being revealed through a trend known as fast fashion. After SOS notes were found in clothes from some of the large and popular retail stores, the conditions under which clothes are currently being created came under the spotlight. The notes in question were reportedly slipped into the pockets of in-store garments by workers from a factory, begging consumers to help them in their campaign for better working conditions and their company to pay them the wages they owed. One of the notes read: 'I made this garment you are going to buy, but I didn't get paid for it.' It has been reported that the factory in question was shut down overnight, leaving the workers unpaid.

Fast fashion, which entails the process whereby products and designs move quickly from catwalks to the stores and retailers, is affecting a number of areas negatively, while advancing problems such as child labour and human trafficking. An unprecedented demand for clothing on a wide scale is resulting in global clothing brands continuously requiring large numbers of items that are produced unethically in factories that do not look after their employees properly. The first area that is affected is the lives and the health of the workers in production plants that supply these retailers. According to an investigation conducted by Forbes, in countries that engage in mass production of these brands, little is done to protect the workers and underage persons employed by this sector. Consequently, women and young workers are trapped in poverty.

Some popular brands are additionally found to be buying their fabric from Asian factory plants that are guilty of contaminating local rivers, exposing the community to various toxic chemicals by simply washing their clothing in the water. This type of industrial pollution led to local families reporting new cases of cancer and a number of birth deformities. The dyes used to colour clothing in businesses that specialise in fast fashion usually contain toxic chemicals like nonylphenol. When this chemical comes into contact with the body, it builds up in the body, and is linked to allergic eye and skin reactions too.

Consumers can support the initiatives of companies that work to eradicate fast fashion's negative results, such as the *Shwopping* campaign by Marks & Spencer and Nike's high-performance sportswear made from recycled plastic bottles. It can also be a good idea to play your part to minimise the damage of fast fashion and look after your health. The main focus should be on quality and not quantity. If you do a decent inventory of your wardrobe, chances are you will realise that many of the items are not being worn. By curating your closet, you can stop spending finances on items you will not use anyway and choose clothing that will benefit you for longer.

Consumers can partake in showing support for retailers that take their social responsibility seriously to minimise the damage done by fast fashion on our health, environment and human rights. It will not be wrong to demand transparency from your favourite retailers. The #WhoMadeMyClothes campaign has done much to increase awareness of consumers' responsibility and encourage the public to research their shopping beforehand. This encourages consumers and the fashion industry to hold brands accountable for the safety of workers.

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