



CAMBRIDGE O LEVEL — MODEL EXAMINATION PAPER

ENGLISH LANGUAGE 1123

Paper 1: Reading (Set C)

YOUR PHYSICAL & ONLINE SELF-ASSESSMENT ROADMAP

PHYSICAL

1. Download any practice test →
2. Solve within assigned time →
3. Submit it to your Teacher/Examiner →
4. Get assessed and improve

ONLINE

1. Visit edusambam.com →
2. Open Assessment Arena →
3. Solve online papers →
4. Get auto-assessed and improve

Candidate Name:		Centre Number:	
Candidate Number:		Date:	
School / Institution:		Test Centre:	

Subject	English Language	Component	1123 / Paper 1
Focus	Reading	Total Marks	80
Time Allowed	2 Hours	Version	C



General Instructions

1. Read both passages carefully before answering any question.
2. Answer all questions in the spaces provided.
3. For Questions 1–3, answer in your own words as far as possible unless a question asks you to find a specific word.
4. For Question 4 (Summary), write in continuous prose, not note form, and keep to the word limit given.
5. For Question 5 (Directed Writing), address every bullet point and stay within the suggested word count.
6. Write in dark blue or black ink. Do not use correction fluid.
7. Dictionaries are not permitted.
8. This worksheet is prepared from the EDUSAMBAM practice assessment supplied for this paper.

Paper Pattern

Question	Focus	Parts	Marks
Question 1	Passage A — comprehension	5	15
Question 2	Passage A — vocabulary in context	5	5
Question 3	Passage B — comprehension	5	20
Question 4	Summary (Passage B)	1	15
Question 5	Directed writing (A & B)	1	25
Total	Reading Paper	17	80

This is an original model paper written by EDUSAMBAM, designed in the style and format of Cambridge O Level English Language 1123 Paper 1. It is not an official Cambridge Assessment International Education document and does not reproduce any real past paper.



Passage A

Read Passage A carefully, and then answer Questions 1 and 2 on pages that follow.

The Night Bus

1 The last bus of the night is a different kind of vehicle from the ones that run in daylight. It moves slower, or seems to, and carries only the people who have missed something else — a train, a lift, a better plan. I had missed all three.

5 I sat near the back, where the heating didn't quite reach, and watched the orange streetlights slide past the window in a rhythm that felt almost kind. Two seats ahead, an old man in a flat cap held a paper bag of chips loosely on his lap, as though he had forgotten it was there.

9 It was he who spoke first, without turning around. "You look like someone who's had a night of it," he said, to the window rather than to me. I laughed before I decided to, surprised into it.

12 We talked the way strangers do on night buses, which is to say properly, without the caution people use in daylight, when there is a chance you might see each other again. He told me about a wife he had buried two winters ago, and a garden he no longer had the will to tend. I told him about the interview I had just failed, spectacularly, by forgetting the name of the company I was interviewing for.

18 He didn't offer advice, which I was grateful for. He simply nodded at the right moments, the way a good listener does, and passed me a chip without asking if I wanted one, which somehow made it easier to accept than if he had.

22 When the bus reached my stop, he wished me luck with a formality that suggested he meant it, and I realised I didn't know his name, and never would. That seemed, at the time, exactly right — a small kindness that didn't need to survive the night to matter.



Passage B

Read Passage B carefully, and then answer Question 3 on the page that follows.

Repair Cafés: Mending Things, Mending Communities

1 On a Saturday morning in a church hall or community centre, a small crowd gathers around folding tables scattered with broken toasters, torn jackets, and lamps that no longer light. This is a repair café: a free, volunteer-run event where people bring broken belongings to be fixed, rather than thrown away, with the help of volunteers who simply enjoy mending things. First held in Amsterdam in 2009, the idea has since spread to thousands of towns and cities worldwide.

7 The appeal, organisers say, rests on more than thrift. Many household items are discarded not because they are beyond repair but because replacing them is often cheaper and faster than finding someone willing to fix them. Repair cafés reverse that equation: volunteers, often retired engineers, tailors, or electricians, donate their skills for free, turning an afternoon's labour into a second life for a toaster or a broken zip. Just as importantly, organisers point to the social side of the events — strangers chatting over a soldering iron, and older volunteers passing on skills that younger generations rarely learn at school.

15 Not every item can be saved, however, and the limits of the model are real. Modern appliances are frequently built with sealed components or proprietary parts that make repair difficult or, in some cases, impossible, and volunteers sometimes have to send visitors away disappointed. There are questions, too, about liability: a small number of councils have raised concerns about who is responsible if a repaired item later causes an injury, and some repair cafés have had to take out additional insurance as a result.

22 Opinions differ on how much difference the movement can really make. Enthusiasts argue that repair cafés are a meaningful part of the answer to household waste, and that they quietly rebuild practical skills and community connections that many neighbourhoods have lost. Sceptics counter that, against the scale of global electronic and textile waste, a few thousand volunteer-run events amount to a symbolic gesture at best, and that the deeper problem lies with manufacturers who design products that are difficult to repair in the first place.

28 Whatever the disagreement over impact, the movement shows little sign of slowing. Several governments now offer small grants to local repair groups, and some manufacturers, facing new “right to repair” laws, have begun publishing repair manuals they once kept private. The broken toaster on the table has become an unlikely symbol of a larger argument about how things ought to be made, and unmade.



Questions

Answer all questions.

Question 1 — Passage A

Re-read Passage A, and then answer the following questions.

(a) Give one word from lines 1–5 which suggests that the night bus felt gentler or calmer than usual. [2]

(b) "We talked the way strangers do on night buses, which is to say properly, without the caution people use in daylight" (lines 12–13). Explain in your own words what this suggests about how the narrator felt able to talk to the stranger. [3]

(c) Why, according to lines 12–17, might it be unfair to assume this conversation was just "small talk"? Give two reasons, using your own words as far as possible. [4]

(d) What does the old man's action of passing a chip without asking (lines 18–20) suggest about his approach to kindness? [3]

(e) Explain what the narrator means by saying the kindness "didn't need to survive the night to matter" (line 23). [3]



Question 2 — Vocabulary in Context (Passage A)

Choose one word from Passage A which is closest in meaning to each of the following. Give the paragraph number where the word appears.

(a) not moving quickly; unhurried (paragraph 1) [1]

(b) held in a relaxed way, not firmly (paragraph 2) [1]

(c) taken aback; caught off guard (paragraph 3) [1]

(d) carefulness people show with those they don't know well (paragraph 4) [1]

(e) correct, polite manner (paragraph 6) [1]



Question 3 — Passage B

Re-read Passage B, and then answer the following questions.

(a) According to paragraph 1, give both the city and the year in which the first repair café was held. [2]

(b) Using your own words as far as possible, explain three reasons given in paragraph 2 why repair cafés appeal to people. [6]

(c) What is meant by the phrase "the limits of the model are real" (line 15)? [3]

(d) Explain, in your own words, why people mentioned in paragraph 4 hold differing views about the impact of repair cafés. [5]

(e) What overall impression of the future of the repair café movement is created in the final paragraph? [4]



Question 4 — Summary

Using material from Passage B only, summarise the reasons why repair cafés have become popular, and the limitations they face.

Write your summary in continuous prose (not note form). Your summary should be no more than 100 words, not counting the words given to help you begin.

Begin your summary as follows: "Repair cafés have become popular because..."

Up to 10 of the 15 marks available are for the content of your summary, and up to 5 marks are for the quality of your writing.

[15]



Question 5 — Directed Writing

A local magazine has invited readers to submit a short article about community events that bring people together.

Using ideas from both Passage A and Passage B, write the article. In your article you should:

- describe a personal-style encounter with a stranger, in a similar spirit to Passage A
- explain, using ideas from Passage B, how community-based initiatives can create connection as well as practical benefits
- suggest one way readers could get involved in a similar initiative in their own area

Base your article on what you have read in Passage A and Passage B, but be careful to use your own words. Address each of the three bullet points above.

Write about 200 to 300 words.

Up to 15 of the 25 marks available are for the content of your article, and up to 10 marks are for the quality of your writing.

[25]





Mark Allocation Summary

Question	Focus	Marks
1	Passage A — comprehension (explicit & implicit meaning)	15
2	Passage A — vocabulary in context	5
3	Passage B — comprehension (explicit & implicit meaning)	20
4	Summary (Passage B)	15
5	Directed writing (Passages A & B)	25
	Reading total	80

Candidate Signature

Invigilator Signature

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Marks Obtained: ____ / 80		Checked By:	
Result / Grade:		Date Checked:	



Marking Guidance & Model Answers

Teacher reference: this paper contains largely open-ended, own-words responses. Equivalent, grammatically sound wording that captures the same meaning should be accepted. Guidance below indicates the key content expected, not a single fixed wording.

Question 1 — Passage A

- (a) Any one of: kind / slower — indicating the night bus felt gentler or calmer than usual. [2]
- (b) Accept answers indicating a sense of freedom or openness in talking to a stranger, because there was little risk of awkwardness later, unlike conversations with people you might see again. [3]
- (c) Two of: the old man shared something genuinely personal and painful (his wife's death, his garden); the narrator shared a real, vulnerable failure (the interview) — both went beyond superficial chat. [4]
- (d) Accept: suggests a quiet, undemonstrative kindness that doesn't need to be formally offered or acknowledged, which made it easier for the narrator to accept. [3]
- (e) Accept: suggests that small, anonymous acts of kindness can matter in themselves, without needing to lead to a lasting relationship or be remembered. [3]

Question 2 — Vocabulary in Context

- (a) slower (b) loosely (c) surprised (d) caution (e) formality — one mark each for the correct word. [5]

Question 3 — Passage B

- (a) Amsterdam, in 2009. [2]
- (b) Three of: replacing items is often more expensive/slower than repairing them, so repair cafés offer a practical alternative; volunteers enjoy donating their skills for free; the events bring people together socially and let older volunteers pass on skills to younger generations. [6]
- (c) Accept: acknowledges that repair cafés cannot fix everything — there are genuine constraints, such as sealed or proprietary components and questions about liability. [3]



(d) Accept: enthusiasts see repair cafés as a meaningful contribution to reducing waste and rebuilding community skills; sceptics see them as a largely symbolic gesture given the scale of global waste, and argue manufacturers are more to blame. [5]

(e) Accept: a sense that the movement is gaining legitimacy and momentum, supported by government grants and manufacturers responding to “right to repair” laws, suggesting a lasting rather than a passing influence. [4]

Question 4 — Summary (Model Answer)

Repair cafés have become popular because volunteers offer free skilled labour to mend items that would otherwise be replaced, and because the events bring people together socially, letting older volunteers pass on practical skills. However, the model has limits: modern appliances are often built with sealed or proprietary parts that make repair difficult or impossible, and some councils have raised concerns about liability if a repaired item later causes injury, leading some cafés to take out additional insurance. Opinions also differ on how much real impact such small-scale volunteer efforts can have.

Mark on coverage of the key content points (up to 10) and quality/concision of expression (up to 5). [15]

Question 5 — Directed Writing (Marking Guidance)

Award content marks (up to 15) for: a personal-style encounter with a stranger in the spirit of Passage A; an explanation, drawing on Passage B, of how community initiatives create connection as well as practical benefits; and a specific suggestion for getting involved. All three bullet points should be addressed, in the candidate's own words.

Award language marks (up to 10) for register and tone appropriate to a community magazine article, clear paragraphing, and accuracy of grammar, spelling, and punctuation. [25]