



# Cambridge International AS Level

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ENGLISH GENERAL PAPER

8021/21

Paper 2 Comprehension

October/November 2019

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1 hour 45 minutes

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## INFORMATION

- This insert contains all the resources referred to in the questions.
- You may annotate this insert and use the blank spaces for planning. **Do not write your answers** on the insert.

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This document has **8** pages. Blank pages are indicated.

## Material for Section A

### Background

The Albin Tennis Club holds a prestigious regional tennis tournament every year. Antonia Lund, the new chairperson of the club, wants the first such tournament that she is in charge of to be a resounding success, especially since the club's membership numbers have started to decrease, leading to a fall in income for the tennis club. Her first thought, in order to gain maximum publicity, was to arrange for a sports star to declare the tournament open and play a short exhibition match with Bernd Bauer, the former world number 16 and the most famous tennis player to have been produced by the club. Her research has yielded three possible sports stars living in Albin:

#### (i) Axel Grilli

He is currently the highest-ranked golf player in the country and appears frequently in the media, not only because he is winning an increasing number of tournaments but also because Oliana, his wife, is a high-profile actress in a very popular daytime soap opera.

#### (ii) Ronia Gaud

She was the country's best-ever badminton player and the first person in the country to win an Olympic gold medal so she is much revered in the area. She appears in the press to promote her annual badminton tournament and runs a summer school to encourage more participation in sport.

#### (iii) Tobi Foo

He is an up-and-coming young tennis player, just starting to make a name for himself as he unexpectedly won a grand prix tennis match against the world number one player. He acquired an agent to negotiate on his behalf when a multinational sportswear company initiated sponsorship talks with him last month.

### Part of a conversation between Antonia and Saul Ritov, the departing chairperson

Antonia: (excitedly) I have so many plans, Saul! Looking to get a sports star to open the tournament.

Saul: (sounding cautious) Oh well, you know this is a very old-fashioned club indeed, with traditional values. Are you sure that such razzmatazz is appropriate? And the tournament made a loss last year, remember, so ...

Antonia: (cutting in) Exactly! I need to shake things up a bit. Get things moving here. Make things happen. I won't be swayed!

Saul: (sounding worried) Have you discussed this with the president of the club?

Antonia: (confidently) No, but I am sure that he will think that it is a great idea.

Saul: (unconvinced) Oh ... maybe ...

Antonia: (oblivious to Saul's words and carried away by her own enthusiasm) I'm so glad you agree with me. This will be the first of many changes I intend to make. Really value your support, you know.

Saul: (looking uncomfortable whilst fiddling with his tie) Er ... well ... I didn't quite say that I ...

Antonia: (butting in yet again) I know that your backing of my sports star idea will further convince the president that it is a real winner of an initiative. Thanks so much, Saul, I'll pass on your views at our next board meeting. Bye for now, then (breezing off into the distance).

Saul: (spluttering in disbelief) But ... but I didn't say that I ... Oh no!

### **Additional information**

- 1 Recently Tobi has felt overwhelmed by all the attention he has been receiving.
- 2 A national television company is in the process of making a documentary about Ronia.
- 3 There were some very negative press reports about the state of the relationship between Axel and Oliana. She is apparently very unhappy about his frequent lengthy absences from home.
- 4 The president has held the office for 25 years and is proud of what he has achieved since buying the club, especially his promotion of family tennis days.
- 5 Axel's agent has a reputation for being a ruthless negotiator.
- 6 A rumour that Ronia has been ill was denied by her husband last month, but it surfaced again at the weekend.
- 7 The tennis club is situated in the western suburbs of Albin.
- 8 Tobi benefited from a masterclass run by Bernd at the Albin Tennis Club when he was 16.
- 9 Axel played tennis a little when he was a boy.
- 10 Ronia does not have an agent.
- 11 Oliana started her acting career in a children's television programme.
- 12 Suffering from nervous exhaustion, Tobi had to take a month off after his big grand prix tennis match win.
- 13 It has been announced by the president that five per cent of the money earned from the tournament will be donated to local sports charities.
- 14 Ronia has fallen on hard times so she is now contemplating selling her gold medal to raise some much-needed cash.
- 15 Bernd lives in a beautiful house to the south of Albin.
- 16 Three years ago, Axel set up a foundation in his name to enable disadvantaged children to learn how to play golf.

## Material for Section B

### A magazine article by Suzy Hansen

#### All Sewn Up

Zara is a humble brand from a backwater of Spain. So how did it become the world's most successful fashion chain?

Galicia, on Spain's Atlantic coast, is famous for being a place people try to leave. For much of the twentieth century, hundreds of thousands of Gallegos, as they are called, emigrated to countries as far away as Argentina to escape Galicia's rural poverty. But today the Galician city of La Coruña has attracted notice as the hometown of Amancio Ortega Gaona, the world's third richest man and founder of a wildly successful fashion company, Inditex, more commonly known by its oldest and biggest brand, Zara. 5

Ortega has never given an interview. He rarely allows his photograph to be taken. Pablo Isla, who took over the company when Ortega stepped down in 2011, rarely gives interviews or waves to the cameras either. In fact, the public face of Inditex is its soft-spoken communications director, Jesus Echevarria, who, as I discovered during a recent visit, is perhaps the only communications director in the world who all but apologises whenever he must answer questions about Inditex's runaway success. 10

The company's outward modesty reflects its surroundings. La Coruña is a quiet place. It's an odd location for an aggressive, global company. The campus consists of corporate headquarters for the entire company. There are also factories and a distribution centre where clothes are loaded on to trucks to be sent around the world. The main building resembled a hospital waiting-room, with rows of plain boxy black chairs and little else. The setting felt appropriate for the age of austerity, even if Inditex is one company in Spain that is actually thriving. 15 20

Inditex is a pioneer among the 'fast fashion' companies, which essentially imitate the latest high-end fashions and speed their cheaper versions into stores. Every one of Inditex's brands follows the Zara template: trendy and decently made but inexpensive products sold in beautiful, high-end-looking stores. 25

Inditex makes 840 million garments a year and has about 5 900 stores in 85 countries, though that number is always changing because Inditex has in recent years opened more than one store a day. Inditex's competitors are way behind. The company's march appears to be as inexorable as the passage of the seasons.

The roots of Inditex go back to 1963, when Ortega started a business making housecoats in La Coruña. In 1975 he opened his own store, Zara, in town, and the holding company, Inditex, was created in 1985. Ortega wanted to maintain his own manufacturing business in La Coruña, so from the beginning his business model differed from the norm. A traditional ready-to-wear fashion company in the West sends the designs for its clothes to independent factories in China and India, where labour is cheap. The clothes are then shipped back and stocked in stores in spring and autumn, with smaller shipments throughout the year. 30 35

But a brand at Inditex will make a spring collection, for example, and then ship only three or four dresses, shirts or jackets in each style to a store. There is very little leftover stock, but store managers can request more if there is demand. They also monitor 40

customers' reactions, on the basis of what they buy and don't buy, and what they say to a sales assistant: 'I like this scooped collar' or 'I hate zips at the ankles.' Inditex says its staff are trained to draw out these sorts of comments from customers. Every day this information is reported to headquarters, where it is then transmitted to a vast team of in-house designers, who quickly develop new designs and send them to factories to be turned into clothes. 45

Over half of Inditex's manufacturing takes place either in factories it owns or close to company headquarters. Inditex owns factories in Portugal, Morocco and Turkey, typically considered costly labour markets. The rest of its clothes are produced in China, Bangladesh, Vietnam and Brazil, among others. The trendiest items are made closest to home so the production process takes only two to three weeks. Inditex's higher labour costs are offset by greater flexibility and a faster turnaround speed. That means that if Inditex stores in London have customers responding to cranberry-coloured shorts, Inditex can deliver more of these, or a variation, to stores within three weeks. 50

The company tries to keep stock fresh; one promise made is that you will always be buying something nearly unique. Merchandise moves incredibly quickly, even by fast-fashion standards. All those Inditex stores receive deliveries of new clothes twice weekly. Thus, Inditex has completely changed consumer behaviour, according to Masoud Golsorkhi, editor of fashion magazine *Tank*. 'When you went to Gucci or Chanel in October, you knew the chances were good that the clothes would still be there in February. With Zara, you know that if you don't buy it right then and there, within 11 days the entire stock will change.' 55 60

But the Inditex effect is not confined to cheap, fast fashion. In Zara, every purchase is an impulse buy because those shorts are as cheap as a meal out, and likely to be gone in days. It's a way of consumption that has conditioned buyers to expect this up-to-the-minute trendiness and variety in higher-end labels too. 'They broke up the century-old bi-annual cycle of fashion,' Golsorkhi said. 'Now, pretty much half of the high-end companies make four to six collections instead of two each year. That's absolutely because of Zara.' 65

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