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FIRST LANGUAGE ENGLISH

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Paper 2 Directed Writing and Composition

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INSERT

2 hours

INFORMATION

- This insert contains the reading texts.
- You may annotate this insert and use the blank spaces for planning. **Do not write your answers** on the insert.



This document has **4** pages. Any blank pages are indicated.

Read **both** texts, and then answer **Question 1** on the question paper.

Text A: Tidiness

The writer of this magazine article discusses attitudes to tidiness.

Whether or not a person is tidy, perhaps particularly a young person, seems to have become a moral issue. It's not just a personality trait which varies from one person to another, but an invitation for others to make snap judgements about their colleagues, classmates, or family members. For some in office workplaces, the old maxim that 'a tidy desk reflects a tidy mind' has become part of workers' terms and conditions. Keep your workspace free from clutter or risk your job! 5

Being able to put your hand instantly on the item you want – a book, perhaps, from among carefully alphabetised shelves – can save time, energy and frustration, and the mere act of cleaning and decluttering is believed to have restorative powers. People who work in the ever-growing decluttering industry try to evoke the great sense of calm that we are supposed to get when sorting out and ordering the things around us. There are books by tidiness gurus to show you how to be tidy and tell you what a huge difference tidiness will make to your career, relationships and prospects. You can hire an 'expert' to help you throw away things you no longer need and organise things you do. Who knew there was a 'right' way to fold T-shirts? 10

For many parents, the extreme, persistent messiness of their teenage offspring is a constant source of family conflict. According to some neurologists, the areas of the brain needed to be organised and tidy are slow to develop, and the process takes years. It's not uncommon for school students to carry every book, piece of equipment, worksheet, gym kit in their heavy bags to every lesson every day, rather than organise what they need for the next day. Their bedrooms are sometimes genuine health hazards and no-go areas for anyone over 18. 15
20

Alongside this idea that tidiness is essential to a happy life is a different view: messiness is actually a clear sign of a creative mind, a sparkling imagination which can't be bound by 'putting things in their proper places'. Creative people see the world differently and don't conform, so deliberately flouting the conventions of tidy living shows just how creative they are. Such superior minds are busy doing much more important things than spending time keeping their space free from clutter. 25

Text B

The passage below was posted by a parent to an online parents' advice forum.

My 16-year-old daughter has invited a classmate to stay overnight but has completely refused to do anything about the horrendous jumble of weeks-old, half-consumed drinks, papers, clothes, books, gadgets, junk of all varieties, which spills out of her bedroom. The friend, and no doubt her parents, will, I'm sure, be as appalled as I am at the mess my daughter lives in. No matter how much I threaten, bribe and cajole, she maintains that it's her space and she's 'got better things to do than tidy up'. I'm even considering taking a day off work while she's at school so that I can give the room a thorough clean. 5

I have no idea how she ever finds anything and she must waste hours of her life looking for things which could so easily be put in their proper places. I work as a teacher of young children and aim to inculcate in them my high standards of order and tidiness. I would be much less effective as a teacher if my classroom was disorganised. I doubt whether any future employer of my daughter will appreciate her messy ways. 10

I'm willing to concede that young people need a space of their own to relax in after school but I wonder if she realises how much calmer and less stressful her life could be if she just took control of the mess. She's lucky she doesn't have to share a room with siblings as I did as a child. I'm convinced that the tidiness I learned then taught me how to respect others at an early age, whereas indulging my daughter's messy habits makes me uneasy that she'll become a selfish adult with no regard for others' needs. 15

I'm considering refusing to allow her friend to visit until she sorts out her room. Is that fair?

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