

Cambridge IGCSE[®] (9–1)

SET B

FIRST LANGUAGE ENGLISH

0990/01

Paper 1 Reading

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.

Read **Text A**, and then answer **Questions 1(a)–1(e)** on the question paper.

Text A: Mining is riven with violence and business is complicit

This text is an article about the mining industry.

Along Central African Republic's (CAR) eastern rivers small groups of independent miners are searching for diamonds and gold. As with many miners, they have to pay for a licence. Their licence, however, is not issued by any government. Violent armed groups control these rivers, and they are the primary beneficiaries of their hidden wealth.

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They are not the only armed groups or oppressive forces benefitting from mining's bounty. The pattern is repeated in many countries stalked by conflict and instability. These valuable resources are dug and blasted out of the ground by small groups of independent miners, or by large industrial companies, before changing hands many times on their way through supply chains that criss-cross the globe.

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Ore becomes metal; metal is transformed into parts and components; these are in turn assembled into the products we use every day: our mobile phones, our cars and our computers. These tiny amounts may not sound like much, but they add up to a global trade in minerals worth billions of pounds.

If you have ever wondered how violent armed groups can afford to pay and equip their fighters, even in some of the world's poorest countries, at least part of the answer is often found in and around these mining sites. Some armed groups seize and run mines of their own, but mining is treacherous. Many therefore prefer to extort or illegally tax independent miners, who have little choice but to brave its many hazards in search of a livelihood. Others levy tolls on key transportation routes in areas where the government offers little protection.

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There are cases in which violence is aimed directly at control of natural resources. More often, however, the root cause of a conflict goes deeper. In such cases, ready access to the cash supplied by the minerals trade can still intensify violence and prolong conflict, creating economic incentives that favour continued chaos over peace.

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In countries like Zimbabwe, partisan¹ national security forces and secret police have looted diamond fields to secure a lucrative off-budget revenue stream that frees them from government budgets and the oversight these bring.

This illicit² trade can flourish because there is an undiscerning³ and ready market for these resources. Global supply chains – many of which lead to major markets such as the EU – are highly secretive and poorly regulated. This offers those with dodgy minerals to sell plenty of weak points where their tainted goods can be mixed into legitimate supply chains. An informal "don't ask, don't tell" culture still prevails.

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1 **partisan**: a strong supporter of a party, cause, or person.

2 **illicit**: forbidden by law or rules

3 **undiscerning**: lacking judgement

Read **Text B**, and then answer **Question 1(f)** on the question paper.

Text B: “Blood Diamond” Review: Wishing things were otherwise

This text is a review of a film called “Blood Diamond”.

Africa breaks your heart—that’s the simplest and most persistent emotion that bursts out “Blood Diamond,” set against the background of civil wars, ethnic conflict, and Western meddling and exploitation. “Blood Diamond,” written by Charles Leavitt and directed by Edward Zwick, is essentially a romantic adventure story with politics in the background—an old-fashioned movie, I suppose, but exciting and stunningly well made. 5

In Sierra Leone, in 1999, a civil war, fuelled by the trade in “blood diamonds”—in which gems are smuggled out of the country and sold to European buyers for arms¹ money—has been raging for years, tearing up the countryside and pulling families apart. Solomon Vandy (Djimon Hounsou), a fisherman, loses his son to the guerrilla² army, the Revolutionary United Front. The R.U.F. also forces Solomon to work in the diamond fields, where he pulls a pink stone from the marshy waters. He buries it, but word gets around. 10

It’s a very big diamond, and a smuggler named Danny Archer (Leonardo DiCaprio), a former mercenary³ in Angola, wants it. In the capital city of Freetown, Maddy Bowen (Jennifer Connelly), a magazine reporter, tries to cozy up to Archer so that she can get the story of how the smuggling racket⁴ works. 15

Solomon, Danny, and Maddy all want something, and they take turns using, helping, and half trusting one another to get it, stumbling in and out of war zones as young killers rampage through the towns firing AK-47s from the backs of pickup trucks. You can enjoy what’s synthetic and movieish in “Blood Diamond” without finding the film any less stirring as a portrait of Africa in chaos. 20

The director, the producers, and the writers are conscientious liberals; they let us know that every time a valuable natural resource has been discovered in Africa—whether it’s ivory, gold, or diamonds—white Europeans have hired surrogates to plunder the goods, and the Africans have suffered terribly. (“Let’s hope they don’t discover oil here,” a war-dazed old man says.) But the filmmakers don’t preach at us; they work out the social meanings and the controlling economic interests through action. 25

“Blood Diamond” is Zwick’s best movie. Like a proficient Hollywood director from sixty years ago, he has found the right balance between star glamour and social conscience. The scenes of rampage and slaughter, shot with a handheld camera that plunges the spectator into the middle of the action, are both nerve-racking and saddening. 30

1 **arms**: weapons, usually firearms (guns)

2 **guerrilla**: a member of a small independent group taking part in fighting.

3 **mercenary**: someone who takes part in military conflict for personal profit.

4 **racket**: an illegal or dishonest scheme for obtaining money.

Read **Text C**, and then answer **Questions 2(a)–(d)** and **Question 3** on the question paper.

Text C: The Duchess and the Jeweller

This text is taken from a longer narrative. At this point in the story we meet Oliver Bacon, born into a poor family in a deprived area of London. After a career in petty crime, he has become the richest jeweller in England. The Duchess of Lambourne has come to sell him some jewellery.

As usual, Oliver Bacon strode through the shop without speaking, though the four men, the two old men, Marshall and Spencer, and the two young men, Hammond and Wicks, stood straight and looked at him, envying him. It was only with one finger of the amber-coloured glove, wagging, that he acknowledged their presence. And he went in and shut the door of his private room behind him.

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“So,” he half sighed, half snorted, “so——”

Then he touched a spring in the wall and slowly the panelling slid open, and behind it were the steel safes, five, no, six of them, all of burnished steel. He twisted a key; unlocked one; then another. Each was lined with a pad of deep crimson velvet; in each lay jewels—bracelets, necklaces, rings, tiaras, ducal coronets; loose stones in glass shells; rubies, emeralds, pearls, diamonds. All safe, shining, cool, yet burning, eternally, with their own compressed light.

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“Tears!” said Oliver, looking at the pearls.

“Heart’s blood!” he said, looking at the rubies.

“Gunpowder!” he continued, rattling the diamonds so that they flashed and blazed.

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“Gunpowder enough to blow Mayfair—sky high, high, high!” He threw his head back and made a sound like a horse neighing as he said it.

The telephone buzzed obsequiously in a low muted voice on his table. He shut the safe.

“In ten minutes,” he said. “Not before.” And he sat down at his desk and looked at the heads of the Roman emperors that were graven on his sleeve links. And again he dismantled himself and became once more the little boy playing marbles in the alley where they sell stolen dogs on Sunday. He became that wily astute little boy, with lips like wet cherries. He dabbled his fingers in ropes of tripe; he dipped them in pans of frying fish; he dodged in and out among the crowds. He was slim, lissome, with eyes like licked stones. And now—now—the hands of the clock ticked on, one two, three, four. . . . The Duchess of Lambourne waited his pleasure; the Duchess of Lambourne, daughter of a hundred Earls. She would wait for ten minutes on a chair at the counter. She would wait his pleasure. She would wait till he was ready to see her. He watched the clock in its shagreen case as the ten minutes passed. Then he heard soft slow footsteps approaching; a rustle in the corridor. The door opened. Mr. Hammond flattened himself against the wall.

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“Her Grace!” he announced.

And he waited there, flattened against the wall.

And Oliver, rising, could hear the rustle of the dress of the Duchess as she came down the passage. Then she loomed up, filling the door, filling the room with the aroma, the prestige, the arrogance, the pomp, the pride of all the Dukes and Duchesses swollen in one wave. And as a wave breaks, she broke, as she sat down, spreading and splashing and falling over Oliver Bacon, the great jeweller, covering him with sparkling bright colours, green, rose, violet; and odours; and iridescences; and rays shooting from fingers, nodding from plumes, flashing from silk; for she was very large, very fat, tightly girt in pink taffeta, and past her prime. As a parasol with many flounces, as a peacock with many feathers, shuts its flounces, folds its feathers, so she subsided and shut herself as she sank down in the leather armchair. 35

“Good morning, Mr. Bacon,” said the Duchess. And she held out her hand which came through the slit of her white glove. And Oliver bent low as he shook it. And as their hands touched the link was forged between them once more. They were friends, yet enemies; he was master, she was mistress; each cheated the other, each needed the other, each feared the other, each felt this and knew this every time they touched hands. 40

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