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Cambridge Assessment International Education

Cambridge International AS & A Level

ENGLISH LANGUAGE **9093/12**

Paper 1 Reading **October/November 2025**

2 hours 15 minutes

4493544272

You must answer on the enclosed answer booklet.

You will need: Answer booklet (enclosed)

INSTRUCTIONS

- Answer **all** questions.
- Follow the instructions on the front cover of the answer booklet. If you need additional answer paper, ask the invigilator for a continuation booklet.
- Dictionaries are **not** allowed.

INFORMATION

- The total mark for this paper is 50.
- The number of marks for each question or part question is shown in brackets [ ].

This document has **8** pages. Any blank pages are indicated.

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Section A: Directed response

Question 1

Read the following text, which is an article about the unique outdoor Minack Theatre in Cornwall, UK.

(a) You live in Cornwall. Your friend or family member is planning to spend some time in the area and has asked your advice on interesting places to visit. Write an email to them, suggesting a trip to the Minack Theatre. Use 150–200 words. [10]

(b) Compare your email with the article, analysing form, structure and language. [15]

Minack Theatre – Complete Visitor Guide

The Minack Open Air Theatre is in one of the most beautiful settings anywhere in the world, perched high on golden cliffs above the turquoise sea.

The Minack Open Air Theatre has to be one of Cornwall's most unique and magical places. This Greek-inspired amphitheatre perches in a valley between craggy granite cliffs which rise steeply from the western edge of Porthcurno Beach. Rows of stone seats rise up from the little stage with balconies clinging to rocky outcrops.

Blending almost seamlessly into the spectacular scenery that surrounds the theatre, you really don't need to come here for a performance to appreciate what a special place this is. On a clear day the view goes far beyond the turquoise waters of Porthcurno Bay and Pedn Vounder Beach, stretching all the way to the Lizard peninsula. If you are really lucky you may even get to see dolphins or basking sharks in the crystal clear waters off the Minack.

It is impossible not to be blown away by this incredible place, even more so when you know that it was the vision and mostly the work of one woman, Rowena Cade.

A history of the Minack Theatre

The name Minack is taken from the Cornish word *meynek* which translates as stony or rocky place. This was the name of the house that the Cade family built on the clifftop for the grand sum of £100. Rowena and her mother had moved to Cornwall after the First World War, following which they were forced to sell their house in well-to-do Cheltenham.

Whilst the Minack looks like it has been here forever it actually dates back less than a hundred years. A labour of love, Rowena commenced construction in 1929 when she was in her mid-thirties with the help of her 'quick, strong, courageous and tenacious' gardener, Billy Rawlings. They set to work moving granite slabs and clearing the heather and gorse that lined the valley.

The *Rowena Cade Exhibition* tells the remarkable story of how a girl who had enjoyed a privileged upbringing built this world-famous theatre with her own hands. She worked every winter in all sorts of weather and was still a familiar sight with her wheelbarrow until she was well into her eighties. When she died, just before her ninetieth birthday, she left sketches suggesting how the Minack Theatre might be covered on rainy days.

At the beginning, granite was cut by hand and stones were inched into place. The terraces were constructed from earth, stones and pebbles on a slope above a sheer drop into the ocean. The seats were added over subsequent years, and while they look like they are made of stone it is actually a mix of cement and sand from the beach below.

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There is, however, one granite seat in the Minack, and that has been dedicated to gardener and co-builder, Billy Rawlings, who died in 1966. *35*

If you look closer at the seats that rise steeply on the left-hand side of the theatre you will see they have all been engraved with the names and dates of the performances that took place earlier on in the Minack's lifetime. Much of the theatre is actually decorated with what look like celtic-inspired designs which Rowena etched using a screwdriver on the wet cement. *40*

The first performance (and Minack's raison d'être[1]) held in the theatre was Shakespeare's *The Tempest* in 1932. The stage was lit mainly by batteries and car headlights. As the moon shone across the water below, the Minack Theatre came magically alive for the first time. In 1944 the Minack was chosen as a location in *Love Story*, a film starring Stewart Granger and Margaret Lockwood. The film featured 'Cornish Rhapsody', which became a popular piano recording. *45*

In 1976, Rowena Cade donated the Minack Theatre to the charitable trust which now administers it. Now, this theatre that began as a garden venue has developed into a world-famous venue for good amateur theatrical groups. As players in such groups, many of today's stars have appeared on this open-air stage. *50*

[1] *raison d'être*: the most important reason for the existence of someone/something

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Section B: Text analysis

Question 2

Read the following text, which is an extract from a book about natural wonders of the world. In the text, the narrator describes her encounter with a whale shark.

Analyse the text, focusing on form, structure and language. [25]

WHALE SHARK

Rhincodon typus

When the dive master yelled *Flaaat!*

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I knew that whale sharks belong in the wild, where they can do more than trace a slow curve around the same planted coral and faux sea-cliff.

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