

Pearson Edexcel International GCSE

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Morning (Time: 3 hours)

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English Language B

Paper 1

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Text One

London Teenager Wins 2017 Young Sailor of the Year Award

adapted from an article by Helen Fretter

In this passage, the writer describes how a London school has an unusual and inspiring after-school club.



Montel Fagan-Jordan, a pupil at Greig City Academy in Haringey, London, has been awarded the prestigious Young Sailor of the Year 2017 trophy. The 17-year-old was one of the outstanding sailors who took part in the challenging Fastnet Yacht Race¹ on his school's vintage yacht, Scaramouche.

Greig City Academy teacher Jon Holt, who runs the sailing programme, commented online before the announcement: 'A lot of people know about our project but few know that Montel did EVERY talk for fundraising (over 50) and took EVERY sailing opportunity possible which came our way. Everyone nominated tomorrow deserves it but for a lad who has, at 17, charmed sponsors, persuaded big sailing companies to support the project, sailed over 3000 miles and done masses behind the scenes at school for Project Scaramouche I think if he wins, it will reflect his commitment and effort!' 5 10

Earlier this year, we found out more about the Greig City Academy sailing programme. There is a lot of well-meaning talk in the sailing world about how to make the sport more accessible – to women, to young people, and to those from different groups within society. Rather than wait for the sailing clubs to open their doors to them, one inner-London school has taken a very different approach to actually making it happen. 15

The Greig City Academy has over 70 per cent of its pupils receiving free school meals and there are over 50 different first languages spoken at the school. Around 73 per cent of pupils are statistically classified as disadvantaged. The pupils are markedly different to that of a typical ocean racing crew. Yet, this summer, eight of its boys completed the Fastnet Race, which is sponsored by the exclusive Rolex watch company, on the school yacht Scaramouche. They became the first state school to compete in the race. 20

But a lot of schools find reasons for not doing stuff. Like the Head Teacher says, they always ask, what if it goes wrong? And they never ask, what happens if it goes spectacularly well?

The school's sailing programme is not based on taking pupils out on the yacht as a one-off experience, but on developing their skills and involvement to as high a level as possible. Jon Holt, Head of Sixth Form, explains how they started in 2013: 25

'We started dinghy sailing in Poole Harbour and what happened is that 12 of the boys really enjoyed it and wanted to take it further. We tried to facilitate that, and initially we sort of made it up as we went along.' 30

The first boat Holt found was a dilapidated 22ft yacht on eBay, which the school bought and restored, but the pupils had set their sights higher.

'We decided that we wanted to enter long distance races, but we didn't have a boat that could do that.'

When Holt found the racing yacht Scaramouche, which was built in 1981, it had been out of the water for four years and was in need of considerable work. All the important bits – safety kit, mast, cables and sails – have been thoroughly restored or replaced, thanks to a vast amount of determination from the pupils, and a lot of good will from the sailing industry. 35

'The boys did a sequence of maybe 40–50 talks to sailing clubs and suppliers. The boys did all of it. All of the money for this, none of it comes from the school, it's all money they've raised through talks,' recalls Holt. 40

Scaramouche is rough and ready down below. At the end of the Fastnet Race it looked very much as you'd expect a 37-year-old yacht crewed by teenagers offshore to look – sweet wrappers and headphones strewn around, damp socks and an overflowing sink. But none of that matters; the boys were not onboard for comfort, they were there for the challenge. 45

Besides the Fastnet Race, in which they finished 142 out of 368 boats, the Academy also competed at Cowes Week² with both girl and boy pupils onboard and over 1000 pupils have gone sailing with Greig City Academy since it began the programme. 50

'They have coped with every kind of condition you could possibly deal with: rough weather, being becalmed for several hours, and they've gained lots of things. They've gained an understanding that you have to work hard to get what you want. They've had to learn interpersonal skills because the crew were selected on ability rather than a friendship group, so some of them are with students they wouldn't normally socialise with in school. And they've learnt how to manage themselves. The key thing they've learnt is resilience, and they are a tough bunch of kids,' said Holt. 55

'I honestly thought there would be bits of the Fastnet Race that they really might not like. I was worried that they would do the race and find it so overwhelming that they might say, okay, it was a good experience but never again. It's been the complete opposite. They were absolutely buzzing the whole way back. They coped well when it was hard. They enjoyed it when it was exhilarating. I will never forget Montel steering the boat, surfing downwind in the middle of the Irish Sea with very big waves. And then as we were coming in, everybody's asking "When's the next race?" So I think they've got the bug for it.' 60 65

¹ A famous long-distance yacht race which can be dangerous

² A world-famous sailing event off the south coast of England

Text Two

After-study Activities

adapted from an article by Steven Dowshen

In this passage, the writer offers advice on participating in after-study activities.



Bored? Looking for a new challenge?

You can watch basketball, baseball, athletics, tennis, volleyball and soccer or you can really enjoy them by joining your school team. Not into team sports? How about the following clubs: French, radio, chess, music, drama, science, maths, dance or join the cadets or a choir?

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So many choices can seem overwhelming, but getting involved in new activities with new people is a fun way to challenge yourself.

What are the benefits of after-study activities?

So what's in it for you? You get to explore your physical, creative, social, political, and career interests with like-minded people. You'll find friends: trying something different may bring you in contact with people you didn't know, who share your interests and curiosity. You can get involved with groups as a way to get support from other students with your background. A club or group also can be a great way to meet people who are different from you. Lots of youth programmes bring people together with those who are different as a way to break down the barriers between people.

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Participating in after-study activities helps you in other ways too. It looks good on college and job applications and shows university admissions officers and employers you're well-rounded and responsible. Specific activities help with specific goals – if you want to teach a language or get a bilingual job, being a member of the French club shows the depth of your commitment.

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How do I find the right activity for me?

Review the activities on offer in your local area and listen to other students' experiences to find an activity that meets your needs. Think about your interests, abilities, and time – have you always wanted to give acting a go? Are you looking to meet friends or get support? Do you need to increase the appeal of your college application? Don't limit yourself to the familiar – try something new. 25

Think about different roles within groups that you might want to try – captain, participant, leader, support person. Each role is important. Being in charge teaches you leadership and management skills, but involves more responsibility; being a member gives you structure and is less stressful. You can also lend your skills in areas that are needed, such as using your maths to be a club's treasurer. 30

How do I get involved?

At the beginning of the academic year, teachers often have a list of activities to join. Check websites or posts on bulletin boards. Ask friends what they like. You can join right away or wait to see how your schedule develops and sign up later. 35

Ask questions before you join. Things to ask about include:

- **Age.** You may have to be a certain age to join an activity.
- **Fees.** Do you have to pay to join? How much? Are there fees for outings, uniforms, costumes, or other expenses? You may be required to help raise money.
- **Physical.** If you're joining a sports team, you may need to take a sports' physical exam. Talking with your family doctor may help you decide whether a team sport is a good choice for you. 40
- **Time.** If you're involved in competitive sports, you need to have the time to practise and compete. Some clubs might meet only every other week, while others meet every day after school or on weekends. 45

If you don't find what you want, try a community centre or volunteer at a local charity or business. You can visit websites like *Volunteer Match* to find volunteer opportunities in your area.

What if I take on too much?

It's easy to join one too many activities. So ask as many questions as possible **before** you join. Sit down with your study schedule, work schedule, and other activities and try to map out what's realistic. Are you taking a class that requires extra studying time? Do you need to focus on grades? Will you have time to eat, sleep, and relax? Everyone needs downtime. If an activity adds lots of stress to your life, it's not for you. 50

It's important to keep a balance between schoolwork, after-study activities, a job, social life, and your health. If you join a club and need to quit for any reason, talk with the leader or coach. Be direct and polite and explain your situation and feelings. Sometimes it's just not the right fit or takes too much of your time. Perhaps you can participate in a less time-consuming way or rejoin later. 55

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Sources taken/adapted from:

Text One:

<http://www.yachtingworld.com/all-latest-posts/inner-city-sailing-hero-2018s-young-sailor-of-the-year-111947>

Photograph: Volvo Ocean Race/Stringer/Getty Images

Text Two:

<http://kidshealth.org/en/teens/involved-school.html#>

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