Province of the
EASTERN CAPE
EDUCATION

Iphondo leMpuma Kapa: Isebe leMfundo
Provinsie van die Oos Kaap: Department van Onderwys
Porafensie Ya Kapa Botjahabela: Lefapha la Thuto

# NATIONAL SENIOR CERTIFICATE

## GRADE 12

## SEPTEMBER 2026

# ENGLISH HOME LANGUAGE P1

**MARKS:** **70**

**TIME:** **2 hours**

This question paper consists of 13 pages.

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## INSTRUCTIONS AND INFORMATION

1. This question paper consists of THREE sections:

   | | |
   |---|---|
   | SECTION A: Comprehension | (30) |
   | SECTION B: Summary | (10) |
   | SECTION C: Language in Context | (30) |

2. Read ALL the instructions carefully.

3. Answer ALL the questions.

4. Start EACH section on a NEW page.

5. Rule off after each section.

6. Number the answers correctly according to the numbering system used in this question paper.

7. Leave a line after each answer.

8. Pay special attention to spelling and sentence construction.

9. Suggested time allocation:

   SECTION A: 50 minutes
   SECTION B: 30 minutes
   SECTION C: 40 minutes

10. Write neatly and legibly.

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## SECTION A: COMPREHENSION

## QUESTION 1: READING FOR MEANING AND UNDERSTANDING

Read TEXT A and TEXT B and answer the questions in your own words as far as possible.

### TEXT A

**WHY ARE AI DATA CENTRES USING FRESH DRINKING WATER INSTEAD OF RECYCLED WATER?**

1 In the summer of 2023, the city of Montevideo experienced its worst drought in more than seventy years. Reservoir levels dropped so drastically that authorities began blending saltwater with the municipal supply to keep taps running. Residents were warned about the quality of the water, and many turned to bottled alternatives.

2 At the same time, the technology company *Google* announced plans to construct a major data centre in the region. The facility, intended to support online services such as YouTube and Gmail, was projected to consume millions of litres of fresh water each day for cooling. The timing of the announcement quickly drew criticism. For many observers, it illustrated a tension that is becoming increasingly difficult to ignore: the digital systems that power artificial intelligence and cloud computing depend on large volumes of the same potable[1] water that communities rely on.

3 Research suggests that within the next decade, the expansion of artificial intelligence could significantly increase global water demand. Some projections estimate that by 2027, AI-related infrastructure may consume a volume of water comparable to the total amount of bottled water consumed worldwide each year. While such estimates vary, they point to a broader pattern: the rapid growth of digital services is accompanied by an equally rapid expansion of the physical infrastructure required to sustain them.

4 The reason lies partly in the physical nature of computing. Data centres – vast facilities filled with servers – convert electricity into computational power. In the process, they generate considerable heat. Managing that heat is essential: if temperatures rise too high, equipment performance declines and systems risk failure. As artificial intelligence models become larger and more complex, the amount of heat produced by the hardware running them increases correspondingly, placing greater pressure on cooling systems.

5 Many facilities rely on evaporative cooling systems to regulate temperature. Water circulates through cooling towers where it absorbs heat before evaporating into the atmosphere. According to the *Uptime Institute*, even a moderately sized data centre can consume millions of gallons of water annually through this process. Unlike water used in closed industrial systems, much of this supply is lost to evaporation and cannot be easily recovered.

6 Given these demands, the reliance on potable water raises an obvious question: why do so many facilities depend on drinking-quality water rather than recycled or treated wastewater?



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7 Part of the answer lies in the sensitivity of cooling infrastructure. Data centre equipment is both expensive and technically complex. Water that contains high concentrations of minerals or impurities can lead to scaling, corrosion, or biological growth within cooling systems. Over time, these problems reduce efficiency and increase maintenance costs. Researchers at Los Alamos National Laboratory, for example, found that high silica levels in certain water sources complicated efforts to reuse water in cooling towers without significant treatment. Removing such contaminants often requires specialised processes, which can be costly and energy intensive.

8 Economic factors also influence decision-making. Although water scarcity is widely recognised as a global challenge, potable water is frequently priced relatively cheaply for industrial users. In contrast, the electricity required to power servers represents a far greater operational expense. As a result, the financial incentive to invest in complex water treatment systems is often limited, particularly when readily available municipal supplies offer a simpler alternative.

9 Infrastructure presents an additional barrier. In many regions, the systems needed to distribute recycled water simply do not exist. According to environmental reports published by *Microsoft*, less than one percent of water used in the United States currently comes from recycled sources. Without pipelines, treatment plants, and dedicated distribution networks, companies have little practical access to alternative supplies.

10 At the same time, the rapid expansion of artificial intelligence is intensifying pressure on existing infrastructure. Large-scale models such as *ChatGPT* require powerful processors that generate even greater amounts of heat, further increasing the importance of efficient cooling systems.

11 In response, engineers are exploring new approaches. One emerging solution involves liquid cooling systems that circulate coolant directly across computer chips in closed loops, reducing reliance on evaporation. Other proposals include locating data centres in colder climates, integrating renewable energy systems, or designing facilities that can operate with significantly lower water consumption.

12 Such innovations suggest that the relationship between digital technology and natural resources may evolve in the coming years. For now, however, the infrastructure supporting the online world remains firmly connected to the physical realities of energy, heat – and water.

[Adapted from https://iol.co.za/news/environment]

**GLOSSARY**

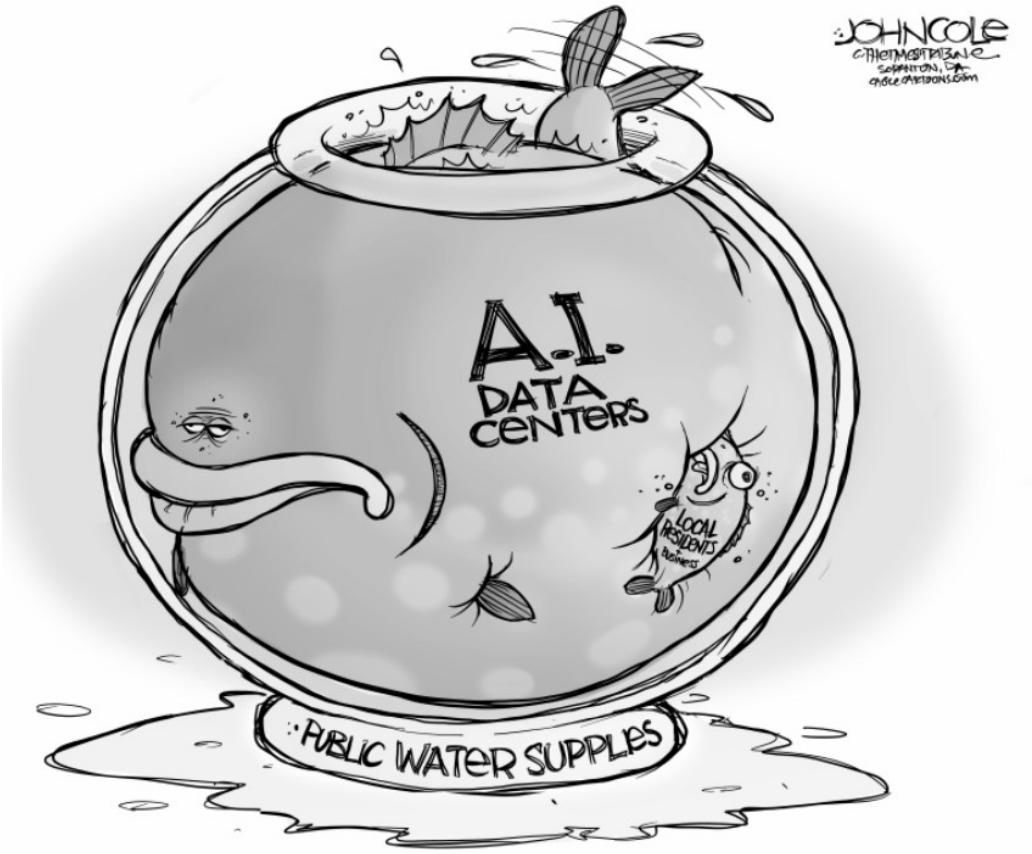
[1]potable – safe, clean and fit to be consumed as drinking water

**AND**



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## TEXT B




[Source: https://cagle.com/cartoonist/john-cole/2025/08/20/299065/]

**Words on the image**:

On the big fish: **AI data centers**
On the small fish: **Local residents + businesses**
At the bottom of the bowl: **Public water supplies**

## QUESTIONS: TEXT A

1.1 Refer to paragraph 1.

Why were authorities in Montevideo forced to mix saltwater with the municipal water supply? (2)

1.2 Refer to paragraph 2.

Explain the problematic timing of the announcement of the planned data centre. (2)

1.3 Refer to paragraph 3.

What does the comparison between AI-related water consumption and global bottled water consumption suggest about the scale of AI's future water use? (2)

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1.4 Refer to paragraph 4.

'Managing that heat is essential' (line 23)

What does this line reveal about the demands of AI technology? (2)

1.5 Refer to paragraph 5.

Explain what this paragraph implies about the sustainability of evaporative cooling systems in data centres. (3)

1.6 Refer to paragraph 6.

How does the question in this paragraph contribute to the development of the writer's argument? (2)

1.7 Refer to paragraphs 7 and 8.

Discuss the practicality of using recycled water in data centres. (3)

1.8 Refer to paragraphs 9 and 10.

Critically discuss the extent to which economic factors and infrastructure limitations are valid justifications for the continued use of potable water in data centres. (3)

1.9 Refer to paragraph 12.

Comment on the suitability of paragraph 12 as a conclusion to Text A. (3)

**QUESTION: TEXT B**

1.10 Explain what the fishbowl represents in the cartoon. (2)

1.11 How does the facial expression of the smaller fish contribute to the message of the cartoon? (3)

**QUESTION: TEXT A AND TEXT B**

1.12 Critically evaluate whether the technological solutions described in paragraphs 11 and 12 of Text A are likely to address the concern illustrated in Text B. (3)

**TOTAL SECTION A: 30**

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## SECTION B: SUMMARY

### QUESTION 2: SUMMARISING IN YOUR OWN WORDS.

Read the following passage (TEXT C), which is an adapted extract from *Long Walk to Freedom* by Nelson Mandela. In your own words, summarise **Mandela's reflections on the qualities and demands of leadership**.

**NOTE:**
1. Your summary should include SEVEN points and NOT exceed **90 words**.
2. You must write a fluent paragraph.
3. You are NOT required to include a title for the summary.
4. Indicate your word count at the end of your summary.

**TEXT C**

**LONG WALK TO FREEDOM**

The struggle against apartheid taught me that courage is rarely the absence of fear; it is the determination to act despite it. Fear is ever-present, particularly when one's choices carry the weight of imprisonment or even death. Yet, the measure of bravery is not in the feeling itself, but in how one responds to it, consciously choosing to confront danger rather than evade it.

In my early years, I equated leadership with forcefulness and the display of strength. Experience, however, revealed that true leadership demands more than bold declarations or dramatic gestures. It requires a calm presence in moments of uncertainty, the kind that inspires confidence in others even when doubt lurks beneath the surface. A leader's hesitation can ripple through the ranks, eroding the morale of those who look to them for guidance.

During my time on Robben Island, I observed leadership taking diverse forms. Some men captured attention through passionate, outspoken resistance; others led through quiet consistency, discipline, and patient example. Leadership is less about commanding recognition than about cultivating respect, listening attentively to differing perspectives, and acting with discernment, even when consensus is elusive.

Self-mastery emerged as another indispensable quality. Anger and resentment are natural reactions to oppression, yet allowing them to dictate one's decisions can compromise judgement. In negotiations with those who upheld injustice, composure was vital; personal bitterness could not overshadow the broader objective of liberation. Leadership, I discovered, is inseparable from sacrifice. The pursuit of justice often exacts heavy personal costs, from lost years with loved ones to lives forfeited for a cause greater than oneself. Moreover, leadership is rarely solitary. No individual can effect meaningful change alone; progress depends on collective courage, unity, and the steadfast commitment of many ordinary people whose quiet fortitude sustains the struggle.

Thus, the essence of leadership resides not in mere authority, but in the judicious exercise of courage, the control of emotion, the capacity to listen and inspire, and the willingness to place the welfare of others above personal interest.

[Adapted from Long Walk to Freedom by Nelson Mandela]

**TOTAL SECTION B: 10**

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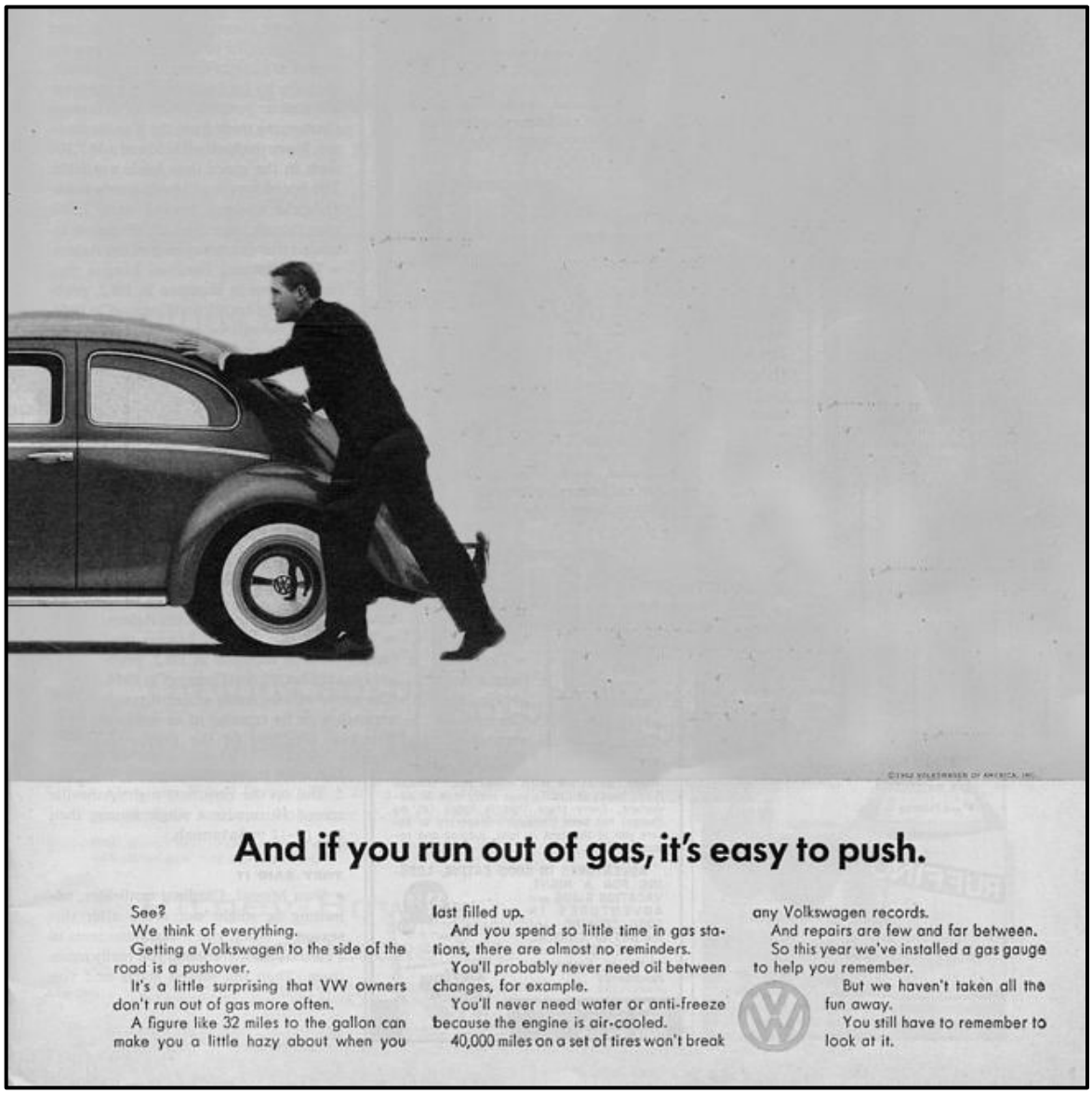
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## SECTION C: LANGUAGE IN CONTEXT

## QUESTION 3: ANALYSING ADVERTISING

Study the advertisement (TEXT D) below and answer the set questions.

**TEXT D**




[Source: https://za.pinterest.com/pin/856669160353924866/]



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Copy of Text D:

**And if you run out of gas, it's easy to push.**

See? We think of everything. Getting a Volkswagen to the side of the road is a pushover. It's a little surprising that VW owners don't run out of gas more often. A figure like 13,6 km per litre* can make you a little hazy about when you last filled up. And you spend so much time in gas stations, there are almost no reminders. You'll probably never need oil between changes, for example. You'll never need water or anti-freeze because the engine is air-cooled. About 64 374 km* on a set of tyres won't break any Volkswagen records. And repairs are few and far between. So this year we've installed a gas gauge to help you remember. But we haven't taken all the fun away. You still have to remember to look at it.

[*converted to the metric system]

**QUESTIONS: TEXT D**

3.1 Choose the correct option (A–D) and write down only the letter corresponding to the answer you have chosen.

'Getting a Volkswagen to the side of the road is a pushover.'

The figure of speech in the above sentence is an example of:

A simile.
B pun.
C synecdoche.
D metonomy. (1)

3.2 Change the following sentence to the passive voice.

This year we've installed a gas gauge to help you remember. (1)

3.3 Refer to the IMAGE.

Explain why the advertiser shows the man pushing the car instead of driving it. (2)

3.4 Refer to the COPY.

Discuss how the tone of the written text influences the reader's perception of the car. (3)

3.5 Refer to the image AND the copy.

Considering that this advertisement was part of Volkswagen's *Think Small* campaign, evaluate how the advertisement challenges conventional ideas about car advertisements. (3)

**[10]**

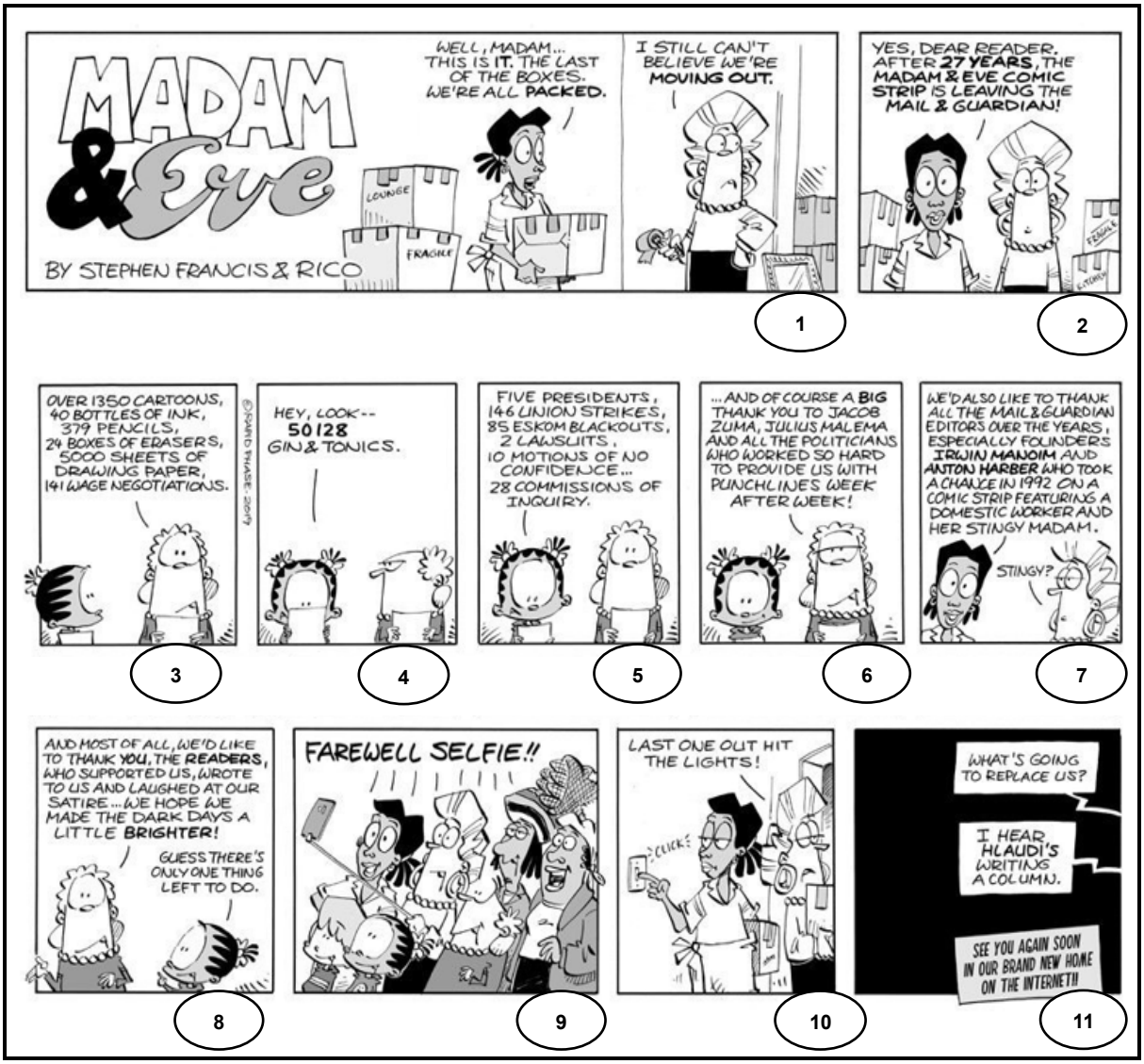
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## QUESTION 4: UNDERSTANDING OTHER ASPECTS OF THE MEDIA

Study TEXT E and answer the set questions.

### TEXT E: CARTOON




[Source: https://mg.co.za/author/madam-and-eve/]

The characters in FRAME 1 are Madam and Eve (the domestic worker).
The characters in FRAME 3 are Thandi (the little girl) and Grandma Anderson (the old woman).



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## QUESTIONS: TEXT E

4.1 Refer to FRAME 1: 'I still can't believe we're moving out.'

Rewrite Madam's words in reported speech.

Start with, Madam said … (2)

4.2 Refer to FRAME 4.

Explain what the statistic '*50 128 gin and tonics'* suggests about the stereotype associated with Madam. (2)

4.3 Refer to FRAMES 5–6.

In FRAME 8 Grandma Anderson thanks the readers for laughing 'at our satire'.

Discuss how FRAMES 5 and 6 reflect the importance of satire in the *Madam & Eve* comic strip. (3)

4.4 Refer to FRAME 9.

Critically analyse how visual techniques create a celebratory tone. (3)
**[10]**



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## QUESTION 5: USING LANGUAGE CORRECTLY

Read TEXT F, which contains some deliberate errors, and answer the set questions.

### TEXT F

**THE WONDERS OF URBAN GARDENING**

1 In the heart of bustling cities, a green revolution is quitely taking place. Urban gardening is becoming a popular hobby for city dwellers as more people discover the joys of growing their own plants and vegetables. Gardening improves air quality and beautify otherwise dull spaces. Gardening provides a sense of accomplishment.

2 Many residents have turned rooftops, balconies and even small windowsills into flourishing gardens. Tomatoes, herbs and flowers thrive in this improvised spaces, showing that even a small plot can yield impressive results. Gardening in cities also encourage communities to come together, sharing tips, seeds and produce with neighbours.

3 However, urban gardeners face challenges such as limited sunlight, pollution and pests. Innovative solutions like vertical gardens, hydroponics and container planting have helped overcome these obstacles. Despite these difficulties, the movement continues to grow, inspiring a healthier and more sustainable urban lifestyle.

4 Experts say that as cities continue to rapidly expand, urban gardening will play a crucial role in promoting food security and environmental awareness. It's benefits extend beyond the individual creating greener, more connected communities, where people can reconnect with nature.

[Adapted from various online articles on urban gardening]

### QUESTIONS: TEXT F

5.1 Refer to paragraph 1.

5.1.1 Identify and correct the spelling error. (1)

5.1.2 Combine the underlined sentences, using 'Not only…but also'. (1)

5.2 Refer to paragraph 2.

5.2.1 Identify and correct the pronoun error. (1)

5.2.2 Identify and correct the concord error. (1)



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5.3 Refer to paragraph 3.

5.3.1 'However, urban gardeners face challenges <u>such as</u> limited sunlight, pollution and pests.'

Which punctuation mark can replace the underlined words? (1)

5.3.2 Provide the meaning of the prefix in 'hydroponics' (line 12). (1)

5.3.3 Identify the part of speech of the underlined word (line 13). (1)

5.3.4 'Despite these difficulties, the movement continues to grow, inspiring a healthier and more sustainable urban lifestyle.' (lines 13–15)

Rewrite the above as a complex sentence. (1)

5.4 Refer to paragraph 4.

5.4.1 Correct the split infinitive. (1)

5.4.2 Correct a grammatical error. (1)

**[10]**

**TOTAL SECTION C: 30**
**GRAND TOTAL: 70**

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