KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCE

EDUCATION
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

NATIONAL SENIOR CERTIFICATE

GRADE 12

ENGLISH HOME LANGUAGE P1

PREPARATORY EXAMINATION

SEPTEMBER 2025

MARKS: 70

TIME: 2 hours

This question paper consists of 13 pages.

Copyright Reserved

INSTRUCTIONS AND INFORMATION

1. This question paper consists of THREE sections:

SECTION A: Comprehension	(30)
SECTION B: Summary	(10)
SECTION C: Language structures and conventions	(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.

Copyright Reserved

SECTION A: COMPREHENSION

QUESTION 1: READING FOR MEANING AND UNDERSTANDING

Read TEXTS A and B below and answer the questions set.

TEXT A

Is Artificial Intelligence making us smarter or just more certain? – *Jon Nosta*

1 Artificial Intelligence's (AI) confident answers are erasing the concept of, "I do not know," thereby threatening the foundation of true wisdom. We are not only outsourcing facts to AI but also our thinking, which is diminishing our cognitive abilities. Innovation comes from embracing uncertainty - an ability we lose with instant AI answers.

2 My sense is that we are witnessing an extinction - not of a species, but of a concept. The phrase, *"I do not know"* is vanishing. Ask an AI programme any question, and it will deliver an answer – polished, articulate, and brimming with confidence - no hesitation, no uncertainty, just a seamless flow of knowledge.

3 But here is the paradox: Does this newfound access to instant, hyper-fluent information actually make us smarter - or just more certain? Socrates, the Greek Philosopher, believed that wisdom began with admitting ignorance. But what happens in a world where we never have to admit ignorance at all? We outsource uncertainty to machines designed to sound right - even when they are not. The real question is not just what we know, but how we know it. If intelligence is judged by retrieval speed rather than deep understanding, are we truly learning? Socrates, valuing wisdom through admitted ignorance, would be horrified. In an AI-driven world, does ignorance even have a place?

4 We no longer sit with questions; we resolve them instantly. We no longer wrestle with ambiguity; we type in a prompt. The result is a world that feels increasingly certain - but it may not be truly more intelligent. Here is the thing: true intelligence is not just about retrieving information. It is about grappling with complexity, navigating nuance, and sometimes, resisting the seductive pull of a quick answer. AI provides rapid responses, but does it encourage real thinking?

5 The original Google Effect (the popular search engine of the internet) - sometimes referred to as cognitive offloading - taught us that when information is readily available, we remember where to find it rather than the content itself. Now, AI is evolving this phenomenon - moving beyond facts and into the realm of interpretation, synthesis and analysis. When AI does the cognitive heavy lifting for us, we stop exercising our own mental muscles. When we let AI summarise books, we may not read as deeply. If we rely on it to structure our thoughts, will we still learn to think structurally? We risk outsourcing the cognitive process itself, not just the retrieval of knowledge.

6 Scientists, and perhaps most of us, have understood that we crave certainty. Our brains reward us for feeling like we are right. This is why confirmation bias is so powerful—why we tend to seek information that aligns with our beliefs rather than questioning our existing views. AI, trained to optimise for coherence and plausibility, delivers answers with an uncanny fluency that reinforces this craving.

7 This is where it gets interesting. What happens when an entire generation grows up in a world where uncertainty is rare, where every question is met with an immediate, confident answer? Every major breakthrough, from relativity to the internet, began with a question, not an instant answer. Einstein (physicist) and Tesla (electrical engineer) wrestled with uncertainty, experimenting and envisioning the impossible. True knowledge arises from deep inquiry. If AI speeds up answers, do we risk losing the vital struggle of understanding the unknown?

8 Great creativity often emerges from discomfort, from not knowing, from sitting with paradoxes long enough to generate something new. If we shortcut that process too much, do we lose something vital?

9 AI does not just provide answers, it delivers them with an air of certainty. Even when it is wrong, it sounds right. But more than that, AI does not just offer facts, it offers what we want to hear. It can shape responses to align with our expectations, reinforcing biases rather than challenging them. And that is an uncertain construct. Intelligence is not just about having information; it is about understanding when to doubt, when to challenge and when to sit with uncertainty.

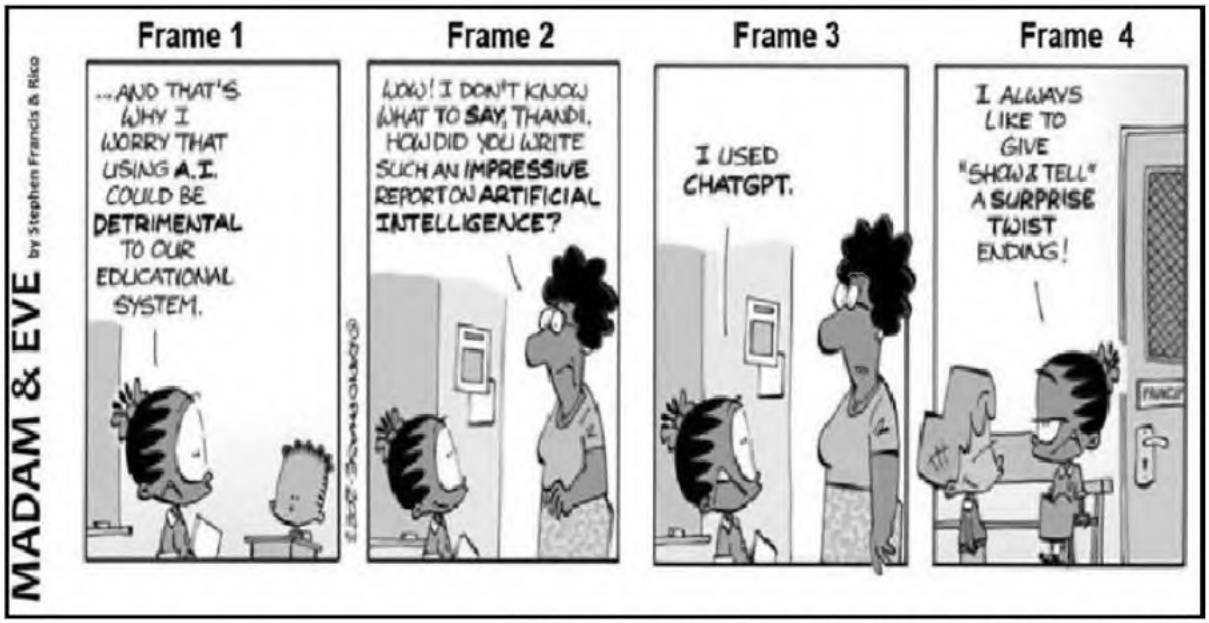
10 So where does this leave us? AI is here to stay, and its ability to deliver rapid, structured responses is undeniably useful. But perhaps our challenge is not just learning how to use AI but learning when not to.

11 We need to resist the easy trap of certainty. We need to cultivate mental humility - the ability to question, doubt, and challenge even the most polished answers. And we need to recognize that intelligence is not just about knowing - it is about thinking, questioning, and creating. This future will not belong to those who simply have access to AI-generated knowledge. It will belong to those who still know how to wrestle with the unknown. And maybe, just maybe, the most powerful phrase we can hold onto is: "I do not know…but let us find out."

[Adapted from: https://www.psychologytoday.com/za/blog/the-digital-self/202502/the-death-of-i-dont-know]

AND

TEXT B



[*Adapted: www.madamandeve.co.za/week_of_cartns.php*]

Characters: Girl – Thandi **Lady - Teacher**

QUESTIONS: TEXT A

1.1 **Refer to paragraph 1.**

How does our dependence on AI impact our cognitive abilities? (2)

1.2 **Refer to paragraph 2.**

1.2.1 What mood is created with the writer's use of the words, 'extinction' and 'vanishing'? (1)

1.2.2 What effect does this mood have on the reader's attitude toward AI? (2)

1.3 **Refer to paragraph 3.**

How does the writer present AI as a factor in redefining intelligence? (3)

1.4 **Refer to paragraph 4.**

Discuss ONE stylistic technique used in this paragraph to convey the writer's argument. (3)

Copyright Reserved

1.5 **Refer to paragraph 5.**

Compare the effects of AI and the Google Effect on how we access and use information. (3)

1.6 **Refer to paragraph 7.**

Summarise why the writer believes uncertainty is important in the learning process. (2)

1.7 **Refer to paragraph 9.**

Critically comment on how AI's biases may impact society. (3)

1.8 **Refer to Paragraph 11.**

In what way does the phrase "I do not know…but let us find out" reinforce the writer's central message? (3)

QUESTIONS: TEXT B

1.9 **Refer to Frame 3.**

What does the teacher's body language reveal about her attitude towards technology? (2)

1.10 Comment on the irony evident in the cartoon. (3)

QUESTIONS: TEXT A AND TEXT B

1.11 Critically discuss the extent to which TEXT B supports paragraph 7 of TEXT A. Justify your answer by referring to both Text A and Text B. (3)

TOTAL SECTION A: 30

SECTION B: SUMMARY

QUESTION 2: SUMMARISING IN YOUR OWN WORDS

Text C discusses the healing power of crying in mind-body wellness.
Summarise, in your own words, **why crying is actually good for you.**

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

CRYING: A POWERFUL TOOL FOR HOLISTIC WELLNESS

Crying often carries a negative connotation and is viewed as a sign of weakness or drama. Recent studies also highlight its mental and physical health benefits. It is often seen as a sign of vulnerability, but in reality, it is a natural and essential process for maintaining overall well-being.

Shedding tears helps release difficult feelings- grief, anguish, or sorrow- significantly benefitting physical health. When we shed tears, the endocrine glands release endorphins, which reduce physical and emotional pain, improve mood, and enhance feelings of relief after a good cry. Additionally, crying reduces stress hormones like cortisol, which may compromise the immune system and elevate blood pressure. This return to balance, mitigates the detrimental effects of prolonged stress and improves sleep quality, further boosting immunity and promoting muscle growth and cell repair.

Letting the tears flow, helps facilitate relief, fosters self-awareness, encourages deepening trust by promoting openness in relationships. In collectivistic cultures like China and Japan, individuals, especially men, often suppress emotions, believing it shows weakness. In contrast, Western individualistic cultures encourage personal expression. This cultural pressure makes crying a powerful and authentic form of communication that fosters solidarity. For example, King David of Ancient Israel openly wept, reinforcing cohesion among his followers. Research shows that tears evoke empathy, leading to a collective desire to support those in emotional distress.

Sobbing serves as a crucial coping mechanism, allowing individuals to acknowledge and process their emotions through a process called catharsis. This introspection helps individuals understand their feelings more effectively. Additionally, crying strengthens social bonds, fostering a sense of belonging which is vital to mental well-being. Lack of belonging can lead to emotional instability and depression. While having numerous benefits, excessive crying can be emotionally draining, leading to physical fatigue, dehydration and distress. It may strain social relationships and indicate unresolved trauma or depression.

Crying is a natural, beneficial process; beyond its known advantages, it also enhances emotional resilience by helping individuals adapt to challenges and build inner strength. Rather than suppressing tears, we should recognize them as a natural and valid expression of emotion, essential for emotional balance and healing.

[Adapted from an article published in The Teenmag by Howard Wang]

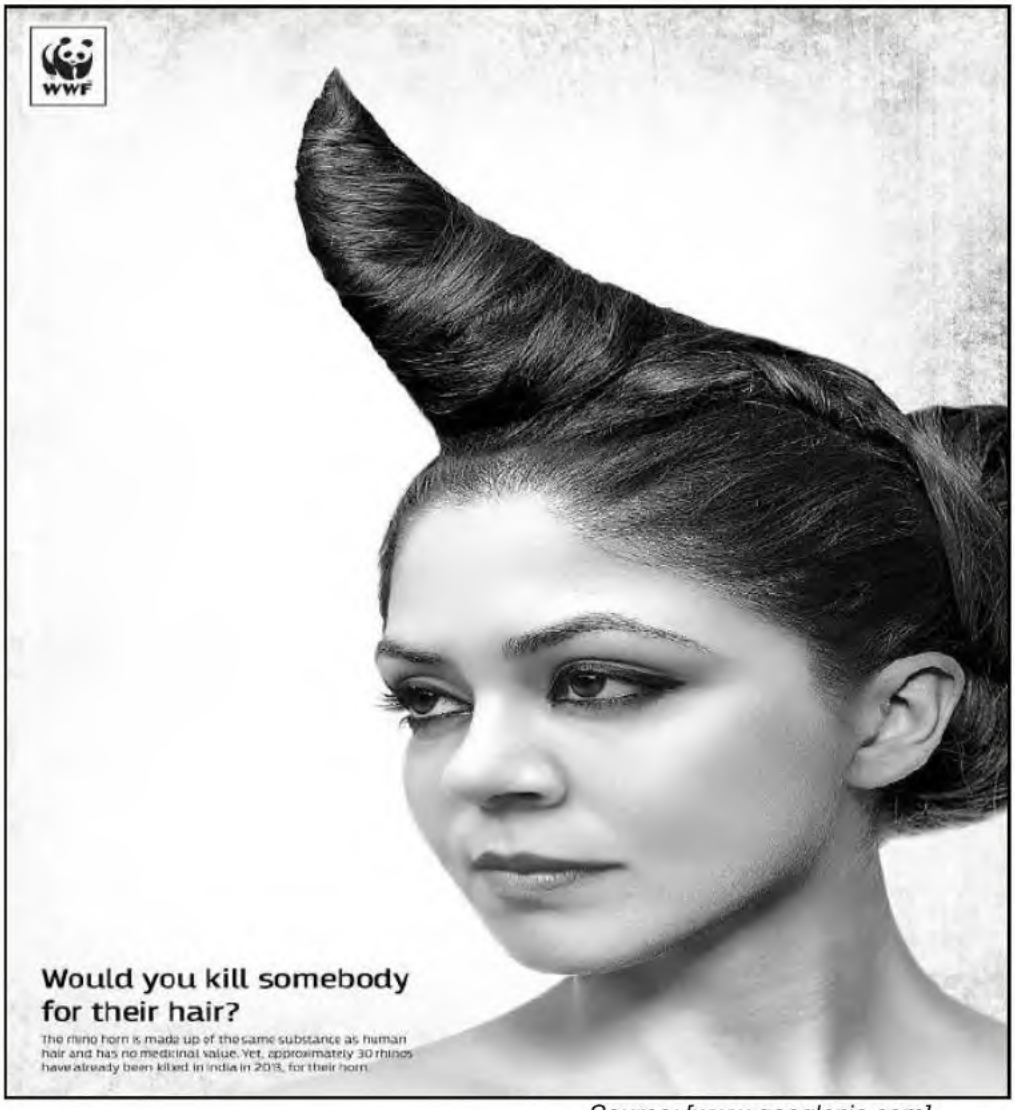
TOTAL SECTION B: 10

SECTION C: LANGUAGE STRUCTURES AND CONVENTIONS

QUESTION 3: ANALYSING ADVERTISING

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

TEXT D



Source: [www.googlepic.com]

The text in TEXT D reads as follows:

The rhino horn is made up of the same substance as human hair and has no medicinal value. Yet, approximately 30 rhinos have already been killed in India in 2013, for their horn.

QUESTION: TEXT D

3.1 What is the purpose of the rhetorical question in the advertisement? (2)

3.2 Refer to the finer text of the advertisement: 'The rhino horn… for their horn.'

With reference to ONE technique and ONE example, comment on how the advertiser promotes the campaign to stop the killing of rhinos. (3)

3.3 Choose the most appropriate response from the list of options provided:

The words '**for their horn'** is an example of...

A. an adverbial phrase
B. an adjectival phrase
C. a prepositional phrase
D. a verb phrase (1)

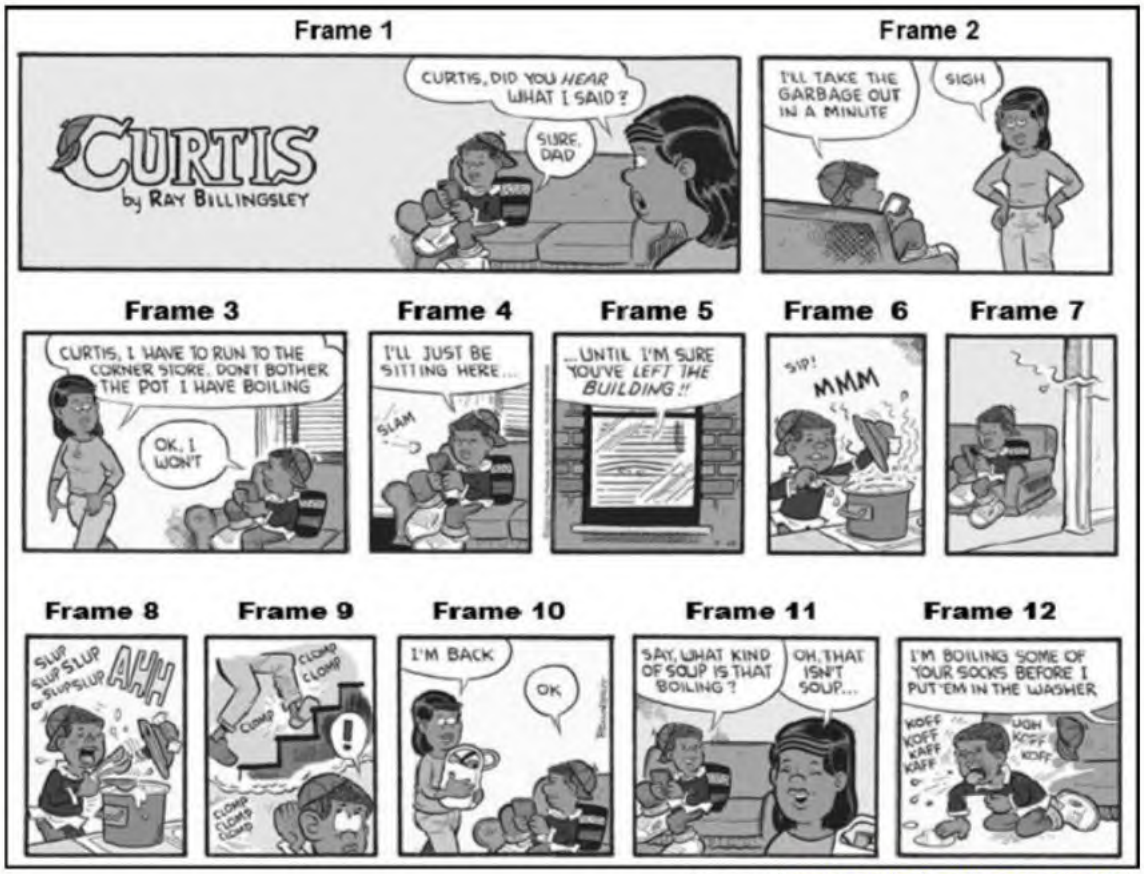
3.4 What part of speech is the word '**approximately**'? (1)

AND

QUESTION 4: UNDERSTANDING OTHER ASPECTS OF THE MEDIA

Study the cartoon (TEXT F) below and answer the set questions.

TEXT F



Source: [www.comicskingdom.com/curtis]

Characters: Boy – Curtis Lady – Mother

QUESTIONS

4.1 **Refer to Frame 2.**

With close reference to the visual clues, explain how the cartoonist conveys the mother's attitude towards Curtis. (2)

4.2 **Refer to Frame 3.**

Identify the part of speech of 'corner' in the context of the cartoon. (1)

4.3 **Refer to Frame 8.**

4.3.1 Identify the mood in the above frame. (1)

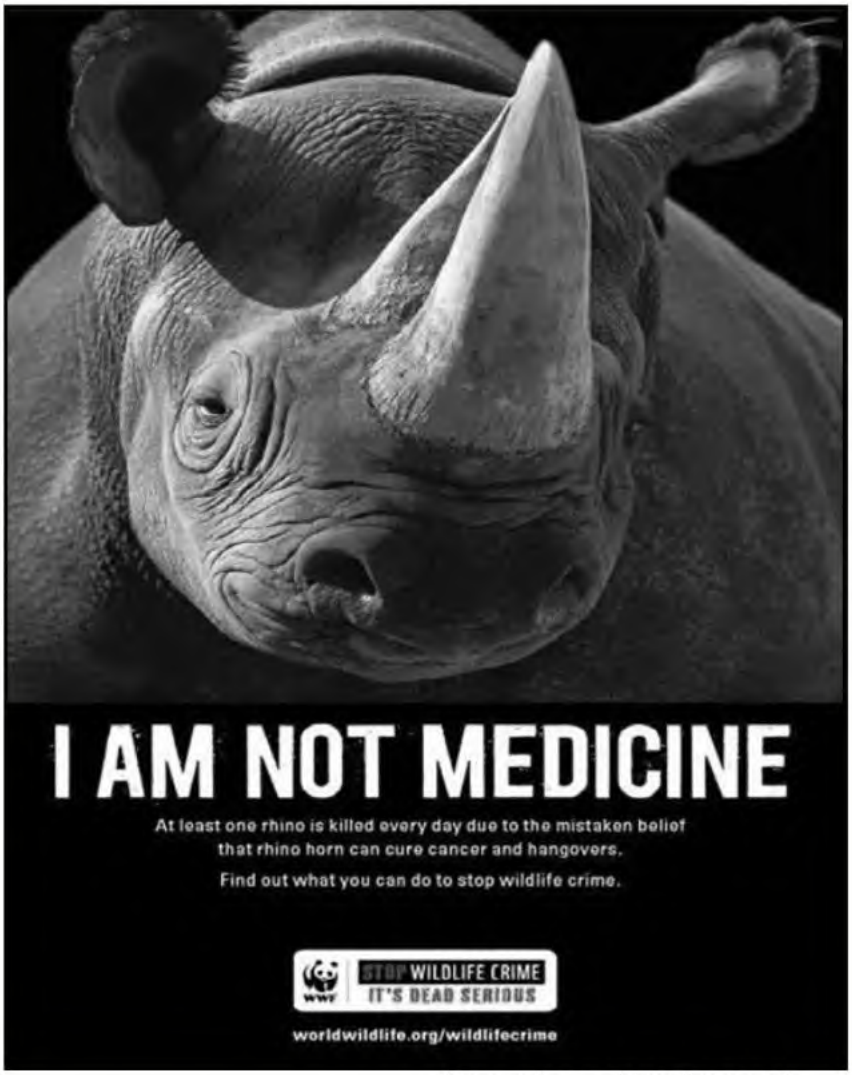
4.3.2 Account for Curtis's mood in this frame. (2)

4.4 Rewrite the following sentence in the simple future tense:
"Curtis enjoys the soup without realising what it is." (1)

4.5 Critically discuss how humour is created in the final frame. (3)

[10]

TEXT E



Source: [www.rhinoalive.com]

The text in TEXT E reads as follows:

At least one rhino is killed every day due to the mistaken belief that rhino horn can cure cancer and hangovers. Find out what you can do to stop wildlife crime. STOP WILDLIFE CRIME IT'S DEAD SERIOUS

QUESTION: TEXT D AND E

3.5 Consider TEXTS D and E.

In your opinion, which visual image is more effective to promote the campaign to stop the killing of rhinos?

Justify your response. (3)

[10]

QUESTION 5: USING LANGUAGE CORRECTLY

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

TEXT G

SQUID GAMES – THRILLING YET FLAWED

1. Reviews for "Squid Game: The Challenge" season 2 praise its thrilling and dystopian atmosphere, with exciting new twists and compelling character dynamics. However, some critics argue that the familiar premise loses some of it's initial shock value. The show's new challenges and moral dilemmas keep the suspense high, but the new characters introduced in season 2 are less impactful compared to the first season's cast.

2. The season's pacing is often a rehash of the first season, with some critics feeling that they rely too heavily on familiar gameplay. Despite this, an entertaining watch is still delivered by the show with its brutal games and high stakes. The visual quality and production design continues to excel, maintaining the distinctive aesthetic of the original "Squid Game".

3. The season ends on a cliff-hanger with viewers who eagerly anticipate a potential third instalment. While some critics feel that the season falters in its execution, the show remains engaging, captivating and thought-provoking, making it a worthwhile watch for fans of the series.

[Adapted from https://www.sandytimes.ae/articles]

QUESTIONS: TEXT G

5.1 Account for the use of inverted commas in "Squid Game: The Challenge" (line 1). (1)

5.2 Correct the pronoun error in paragraph 1. (1)

5.3 Replace the phrase 'moral dilemmas' (line 4) with a synonymous phrase. (1)

5.4 Give the function of the apostrophe in 'show's' (line 4). (1)

5.5 Replace the word 'rehash' (line 7) with a formal English word. (1)

5.6 Correct the concord error in paragraph 2. (1)

Copyright Reserved

5.7

5.7.1 Refer to lines 8 - 9.

"Despite this, an entertaining watch is still delivered by the show with its brutal games and high stakes."

The above is an example of a …

a) Simple sentence
b) Complex sentence
c) Compound sentence
d) Compound-complex (1)

5.7.2 *"An entertaining watch is still delivered by the show with its brutal games and high stakes."*

Rewrite the above sentence in the active voice. (1)

5.8 'The season ends on a cliff-hanger with viewers who eagerly anticipate a potential third instalment.'

Explain the ambiguity in the above sentence. (2)

[10]

TOTAL SECTION C: 30

GRAND TOTAL: 70

Copyright Reserved