

Time allowed **30 minutes**

No dictionary allowed

Choose **one** of the following titles and write between 200 and 300 words

- 1 1. Education in my country
- 2 2. Environmental problems in my country
- 3 3. Computers are not helping us as much as we think.

Section A

Read the following extract twice and answer the questions that follow.

(Extract from chapter one of *Pyramids* by Terry Pratchett)

Reading: (23 marks)

The silhouette was absolutely still. Teppic's eyes swivelled to the maze of chimneys, gargoyles, ventilator shafts, bridges and ladders that made up the rooftop scenery of the city.	1
Right, he thought. That's some sort of dummy. I'm supposed to attack it and that means he's watching me from somewhere else.	2
Will I be able to spot him? No.	3
On the other hand, maybe I'm <i>meant</i> to think it's a dummy. Unless he's thought of that as well...	4
He found himself drumming his fingers on the gargoyle, and hastily pulled himself together. What is the sensible course of action at this point?	5
A party of revellers staggered through a pool of light in the street far below.	6
Teppic sheathed the knife and stood up.	7
'Sir,' he said, 'I am here.'	8
A dry voice by his ear said, rather indistinctly, 'Very well.'	9
Teppic stared straight ahead. Mericet appeared in front of him, wiping grey dust off his bony face. He took a length of pipe out of his mouth and tossed it aside, then pulled a clipboard out of his coat. He was bundled up even in this heat. Mericet was the kind of person who could freeze in a volcano.	10
'Ah,' he said, his voice broadcasting disapproval, 'Mr Teppic. Well, well.'	11
'A fine night, sir,' said Teppic. The examiner gave him a chilly look, suggesting that observations about the weather acquired an automatic black mark, and made a note on his clipboard.	12
'We'll take a few questions first,' he said.	13
'As you wish, sir.'	14
'What is the maximum permitted length of a throwing knife?' snapped Mericet.	15
Teppic closed his eyes. He'd spent the last week reading nothing but <i>The Cordat</i> ; he could see the page now, floating tantalizingly just inside his eyelids – they never ask you lengths and weights, students had said knowingly, they expect you to bone up on the weights and lengths and throwing distances but they never-	16
Naked terror hotwired his brain and kicked his memory into gear. The page sprang into focus.	17
' "Maximum length of a throwing knife may be ten finger widths, or twelve in wet weather", ' he recited. ' "Throwing distance is—" '	18

'Name three poisons acknowledged for administration by ear.'	19
A breeze sprang up, but it did nothing to cool the air; it just shifted the heat about.	20
'Sir, wasp agaric, Achorion purple and Mustick, sir,' said Teppic promptly.	21
'Why not spime?' snapped Mericet, fast as a snake.	22
Teppic's jaw dropped open. He floundered for a while, trying to avoid the gimlet gaze a few feet away from him.	23
'S-sir, spime isn't a poison, sir,' he managed. 'It is an extremely rare antidote to certain snake venoms, and is obtained—' settled down a bit, more certain of himself: all those hours idly looking through the old dictionaries had paid off- 'is obtained from the liver of the inflatable mongoose, which—'	24
'What is the meaning of this sign?' said Mericet.	25
'-is found only in the...' Teppic's voice trailed off. He squinted down at the complex rune on the card in Mericet's hand, and then stared straight past the examiner's ear again.	26
'I haven't the faintest idea, sir,' he said. Out of the corner of his ear he thought he heard the faintest intake of breath, the tiniest seed of a satisfied grunt.	27
'But if it were the other way up, sir,' he went on, 'it would be thief sign for "Noisy dogs in this house".'	28
There was absolute silence for a moment.	29
1. Where is Teppic?	(1)
2. Describe what we learn about Teppic's character from the first FIVE paragraphs by referring to his words, thoughts and actions? You should quote to support your observations. Write about six sentences.	(5)
3. How was Mericet disguised?	(2)
4. What do we learn about Mericet's character from the extract? Quote and discuss different examples. Aim to write about six sentences.	(5)
5. What effects is the writer hoping to achieve in the story with the following descriptions:	
5.1. "Naked terror hotwired his brain and kicked his memory into gear. The page sprang into focus." (paragraph 17)	(2)
5.2. " 'Why not spime?' snapped Mericet, fast as a snake." (paragraph 22)	(2)
5.3. "He floundered for a while, trying to avoid the gimlet gaze a few feet away from him." (paragraph 23)	(2)

Continued over page

6. Provide A WORD OF YOUR OWN that means the same (as used in the story) as:

- 6.1. "revellers" (paragraph 6) (1)
- 6.2. "indistinctly" (paragraph 9) (1)
- 6.3. "promptly" (paragraph 21) (1)
- 6.4. "idly" (paragraph 24) (1)

[23 marks]

Section B

Writing: (27 marks)

Your creativity as well as your accurate use of spelling and punctuation will be taken into account when assessing your writing.

Write about 250 words (one side of paper) on ONE of the following topics:

1. Write the rest of the story (or another page of the story) starting with the last words of the extract, "There was absolute silence for a moment."

OR

2. Based on your own creative thoughts and/or experience, carefully describe a situation in which your courage or quick thinking was severely tested.

[27 marks]