READING 1 (Items 26-35) (10 marks)

Read the text. Then, complete the tasks.

Rashid had waited three years for this trip. Every summer, his grandfather promised to take him to Salalah during the khareef, the monsoon season, and every summer something stopped them. This year, finally, they packed the old Toyota and left their home in the desert town of Thumrait at five in the morning. 'Watch the land,' his grandfather said. 'It will change its clothes.' And it did. After two hours, the brown hills slowly turned green, and thin clouds covered the mountains like a grey blanket. Rashid opened the window and smelled the wet earth for the first time in his life. 'It smells like rain,' he said. His grandfather laughed. 'That is the smell of Dhofar, my boy. People here wait for it all year.'

In Salalah, they stayed with Rashid's aunt near the sea. The next morning, his grandfather woke him early and took him to the frankincense trees in Wadi Dawkah. The trees looked small and twisted, but his grandfather touched one gently and said, 'This little tree made our family rich long before oil.' He showed Rashid how to make a small cut in the bark so the white resin could slowly come out. 'The tree must rest between cuts,' he explained. 'If you take too much, it dies. If you are patient, it gives for a hundred years.' Rashid carefully wrote every word in the small notebook he carried everywhere.

On the third day, they drove up to Ain Garziz, where waterfalls fell over the rocks. Families sat under the trees, cooking meat on small fires and drinking sweet tea. An old man offered Rashid a piece of fresh coconut, and his cousins splashed in the cold water until their clothes were completely wet. That evening, Rashid's grandfather pointed at the green mountains and said, 'People travel to Europe to see nature like this. You have it here, two hours from home.'

The last morning was the hardest. Before they left, Rashid bought a small bag of the best frankincense for his mother and a wooden box for his little sister. As they drove back into the brown desert, Rashid looked at the mountains disappearing behind them. 'Next year,' his grandfather smiled, 'you can drive part of the way.' Rashid opened his notebook to a new page and wrote the title of his summer holiday homework: 'The Season When the Desert Turns Green.'

READING 1 (continued)

Task One: *for each item, shade in the bubble ⬭ next to the correct option.*

26. How long had Rashid waited for the trip?

⬭ **two years** ⬭ **three years** ⬭ **five years**

27. What time did they leave Thumrait?

⬭ **at five in the morning** ⬭ **at seven in the morning** ⬭ **at nine in the morning**

28. Where did they stay in Salalah?

⬭ **in a hotel** ⬭ **with Rashid's aunt** ⬭ **in a tent**

29. What did his grandfather show him in Wadi Dawkah?

⬭ **how to cut the tree bark** ⬭ **how to plant a tree** ⬭ **how to sell resin**

30. What did Rashid write in?

⬭ **a letter** ⬭ **a diary** ⬭ **a notebook**

31. What did the old man at Ain Garziz offer him?

⬭ **sweet tea** ⬭ **fresh coconut** ⬭ **cooked meat**

Task Two: For each item, complete the missing words (not more than TWO WORDS).

32. The clouds covered the mountains like a grey _____.

33. Rashid wrote every word in the small _____ he carried.

34. The families at Ain Garziz cooked meat on small _____.

35. Rashid bought a wooden box for his little _____.

READING 2 (Items 36-45) **(10 marks)**

Read the text. Then, complete the tasks.

Should school students learn traditional crafts, such as weaving, pottery and silver work? In many countries, including Oman, this question appears whenever people talk about the future of education. Some people believe crafts belong to the past, while others say they are exactly what modern schools need.

Those against teaching crafts make several points. School days are already full, they say. Students must study mathematics, science, languages and technology because these subjects lead to university places and modern jobs. An hour spent weaving a basket is an hour not spent learning programming. They also argue that machines can make pots and cloth faster and cheaper than any student, so hand skills no longer help anyone find work. In their view, young people who love crafts can learn them at home from grandparents, and schools should focus on the future, not the past. Some add that craft materials and workshops cost money that science laboratories need more.

READING 2 (continued)

Supporters of traditional crafts see things differently. First, they say, crafts teach skills that screens cannot: patience, careful hands, and the pride of finishing something real. Parents notice it too: a child who cannot sit still for a video will spend a quiet, happy hour shaping wood or clay with full attention. A student who spends a month making one clay pot understands quality in a way no video can teach. Second, crafts keep culture alive. If no young person learns to weave a sadu pattern or shape a khanjar, these arts will die within one generation, and a country that loses its crafts loses part of its soul. Third, crafts can create jobs. Tourists in Oman pay high prices for real, handmade products, and a young craftsman can turn a school hobby into a successful business.

Perhaps the two sides are closer than they think. Schools do not have to choose between computers and clay. A balanced week could include both: modern subjects for modern careers, and craft lessons to keep the heart of the culture beating. Some Omani schools already invite local craftsmen to teach short courses, and students speak about these lessons with unusual excitement. The question is not whether the past or the future should win. A strong country needs both: young people who can write code, and who can also hold a piece of silver and know whose hands shaped it before theirs.

Task One: For each item, write a short answer (not more than FOUR WORDS).

36. Name one craft mentioned in the text.

_____

37. What do opponents say leads to modern jobs?

_____

38. What can machines make faster than students?

_____

39. How long does making one clay pot take?

_____

40. What do tourists pay high prices for?

_____

41. Who do some Omani schools invite to teach?

_____

Task Two: *For each item, shade in the bubble ⬭ to indicate whether the statement is* ***True/False****.*

	Statements	True	False
42.	**Opponents say school days are already full.**	⬭	⬭
43.	**Supporters say screens teach patience better than crafts.**	⬭	⬭
44.	**Handmade products can create jobs for young people.**	⬭	⬭
45.	**The writer says schools must choose only computers.**	⬭	⬭

READING SCORE	
	20