READING 1 (Items 26-30) (5 marks)

*Read the texts. Are the statements which follow each text **True** or **False**?*
For each item, shade in the bubble ⬭ under the correct option.

26. **Dolphin-watching trip, Marina Bandar Al Rowdha. Boats leave daily at 8 am and 10 am. The trip lasts two hours. Dolphins are seen on most trips, but as they are wild animals, we cannot promise you will see them. Children under five go free.**

Statement	True	False
The company promises that visitors will see dolphins.	⬭	⬭

27. **The Environment Society is looking for volunteers to count sea birds on the beach this Saturday, 6-9 am. No experience is needed - our experts will teach you how to identify the birds. Binoculars will be provided. Please wear a hat.**

Statement	True	False
Volunteers must bring their own binoculars.	⬭	⬭

28. **Al Hoota Cave is open from 9 am to 5 pm, Sunday to Thursday. The train to the cave entrance runs every thirty minutes. For safety, children must be over four years old. Book online to avoid queues, especially on public holidays.**

Statement	True	False
Visitors can avoid waiting by booking online.	⬭	⬭

29. **Our school aquarium club meets every Tuesday in Room 9. This week we will learn how to clean a fish tank correctly. New members are always welcome - you do not need to own fish to join!**

Statement	True	False
Only students who own fish can join the club.	⬭	⬭

30. **Whale Shark Season: The Environment Authority reminds all boat drivers to stay at least four metres away from whale sharks. Never touch or feed these protected animals. Report any injured animal to 8007 7000.**

Statement	True	False
Boats must keep a distance from whale sharks.	⬭	⬭

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READING 2 (Items 31-37) (7 marks)

Read the text. Then, for each item, shade in the bubble

The aquarium in the mall had sharks, rays and a tunnel of blue glass, but eight-year-old Zahra stood in front of the smallest tank in the building. Inside it, a single seahorse, no bigger than her finger, held onto a piece of green seaweed with its curly tail.

'Why doesn't it swim like the others?' she asked her father. That evening, he showed her videos of seahorses dancing in the sea grass, and by bedtime, Zahra had announced her new plan: she was going to save the seahorses.

Her teacher, Mrs Amal, took the plan seriously. She helped Zahra write to a marine biologist at Sultan Qaboos University, Dr Khamis, who studies the seahorses of Oman's coasts. To everyone's surprise, Dr Khamis replied with three pages of answers to Zahra's questions. He explained that seahorses are caught by the million in some countries and sold as souvenirs or traditional medicine, and that their sea grass homes are disappearing.

Zahra's class decided to act. They made posters about seahorses for the school corridors. They collected old fishing nets from the beach with the help of a diving club - nets that trap and kill sea animals for years after fishermen lose them. And at the school's Environment Day, Zahra stood at a small table and told fifty parents what she had learned. Some of them donated money to a marine protection charity.

Dr Khamis visited the school at the end of term. He brought photographs of Oman's two native seahorse species and let the children hold a seahorse skeleton, delicate as glass. 'You are now the seahorse experts of your neighbourhood,' he told them. 'Scientists cannot protect animals alone. We need people who care, and caring starts with exactly what Zahra did: asking a question.'

Zahra is ten now. The seahorse tank at the mall is still her first stop whenever the family visits. 'He knows me,' she says seriously. And perhaps, in the way that matters, he does.

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READING 2 (continued)

31. Where did Zahra first see the seahorse?

⬭ at the beach ⬭ in a mall aquarium ⬭ at the university

32. What was the seahorse holding?

⬭ a piece of seaweed ⬭ a piece of coral ⬭ the glass

33. Who answered Zahra's questions?

⬭ her father ⬭ her teacher ⬭ a marine biologist

34. What did Dr Khamis say is happening to sea grass?

⬭ it is disappearing ⬭ it is growing too fast ⬭ it is full of fish

35. What did Dr Khamis bring to the school?

⬭ a live seahorse ⬭ photos and a skeleton ⬭ a video about sharks

36. What did the class collect from the beach?

⬭ plastic bottles ⬭ old fishing nets ⬭ seahorse skeletons

37. What does Dr Khamis say scientists need?

⬭ bigger laboratories ⬭ people who care ⬭ more fishing boats

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READING 3 (Items 38-45) **(8 marks)**

Read the text. Then complete the tasks.

When people ask me why I became a marine scientist, I tell them it started with a pair of yellow fins and a leaky diving mask.

I was twelve when my uncle took me snorkelling at Bandar Jissah. I put my face in the water and saw my first coral reef: purple corals, orange fish, a turtle moving like an old man in no hurry at all. I came out of the water a different person. My uncle says I didn't stop talking for the whole drive home.

At school, I was not the top student. I found maths difficult, and my handwriting was terrible. But I loved my biology lessons, and I kept a folder of every sea creature I had ever seen, with drawings and dates. My biology teacher, Mr Fahad, once wrote in my report: 'Khalid sees the sea the way other boys see football.' He was right.

The hard part came at university. Marine science is not swimming with turtles all day. It is statistics, chemistry, and long hours in a laboratory. In my second year, I nearly failed a chemistry exam and thought about changing my course. My professor said something I have never forgotten: 'Nobody loves every part of the work. The question is whether you love the work enough to survive its boring parts.' I stayed.

Now, twenty years later, I lead a small team studying coral bleaching in the Arabian Sea. Some weeks I am on a boat at sunrise; some weeks I am at a computer until midnight, looking at numbers. Last year, our team discovered that one reef near Mirbat has corals that survive in warmer water than corals anywhere else in the world. That discovery may help scientists protect reefs as the oceans heat up.

My advice to students is this: your passion does not have to be the thing you are best at today. It has to be the thing you cannot stop thinking about. The marks will follow the love, not the other way round. And if you ever get the chance to put your face in the sea off Oman - take it. There is a whole country down there too.

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READING 3 (continued)

Task 1: ***For each item, write a short answer (NOT MORE THAN FOUR WORDS OR A NUMBER).***

38. How old was the writer when he first went snorkelling?

_____

39. Which subject did the writer find difficult?

_____

40. What exam did the writer nearly fail?

_____

41. Where is the reef with heat-resistant corals?

_____

Task 2: ⬭ *For each item, shade in the bubble*

42. Who took the writer snorkelling for the first time?

⬭ **his father** ⬭ **his uncle** ⬭ **his teacher**

43. What did Mr Fahad compare the sea to?

⬭ **a laboratory** ⬭ **football** ⬭ **a story book**

44. What nearly made the writer leave university?

⬭ **failing an exam** ⬭ **missing his family** ⬭ **disliking boats**

45. What does the writer say will follow love?

⬭ **marks** ⬭ **money** ⬭ **travel**

READING SCORE	
	20

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