READING 1 (Items 26-32) (7 marks)

Read each text, then shade True or False for the statement.

Bus Station Notice: Passengers for the 8 a.m. bus to Sur are kindly asked to board at Gate 4. The bus will leave exactly on time and will not wait for late passengers.

26. The 8 a.m. bus may wait a few minutes for late passengers.

○ True ○ False

Hi Dad, my train gets in at 6:30, not 5:30 as I told you. There's no need to pick me up - I'll take a taxi home. See you at dinner! - Your son, Mubarak

27. Mubarak wants his father to collect him at 6:30.

○ True ○ False

AIRPORT EXPRESS: The new airport bus runs every 30 minutes from 4 a.m. until midnight, seven days a week. Tickets: 2 rials from the driver or 1.5 rials with the city transport app.

28. App users pay less for the airport bus.

○ True ○ False

Dear Ms Hana, This is to confirm your driving test appointment on Tuesday 22 November at 9:00 a.m. Please bring your learner's permit and arrive 15 minutes early. Late candidates cannot be tested.

29. Hana can take the test later if she arrives at 9:30.

○ True ○ False

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READING 1 (continued)

ROAD WORKS AHEAD: The coastal road between Al-Bustan and Qantab will have one lane closed from Sunday to Thursday, 9 p.m. to 5 a.m. Drivers should expect delays of up to 20 minutes.

30. The road works happen during the night.

○ True ○ False

Lost and Found: A black wallet was found on bus number 12 yesterday evening. The owner can collect it from the transport office in Ruwi. Please bring identification.

31. The wallet was found at the transport office.

○ True ○ False

SAFETY FIRST: Cyclists must wear helmets and use the marked bicycle lanes. Cycling on the pavement is not permitted. Reflective clothing is required after sunset.

32. Cyclists need reflective clothing when it is dark.

○ True ○ False

READING 2 (Items 33-40) (8 marks)

Read the email, then answer the questions on the next page.

Dear Uncle Salim,
Thank you for your message. You asked how my new life in Muscat is going, especially my daily journey to the college, so here is the full story.
As you know, I moved to Muscat in September to study engineering. At first, I borrowed my cousin's old car, but the morning traffic was terrible, and parking near the college cost two rials every day. After one month, I gave up.
Now I use the new public buses, and honestly, I wish I had started earlier. The bus stop is three minutes from my flat, and buses come every ten minutes. The journey to the college takes about forty minutes - the same as driving, but I can read my lecture notes on the way. A daily card costs one rial, which means I save more than forty rials a month on petrol and parking.
There is only one problem. On Friday mornings, the buses are full of shoppers, and last week I had to stand all the way. A kind old man offered me his seat, which was embarrassing but very sweet!
I have started cycling at weekends too. The new bicycle lane along the sea road is beautiful in the early morning.
Tell aunt that I am eating properly and sleeping well. I will visit you all at Eid, inshallah.
Your nephew,
Talal

READING 2 (continued)

33. Talal moved to Muscat in _____.

○ June ○ September ○ January

34. At first, Talal travelled by _____.

○ bus ○ car ○ taxi

35. Parking near the college cost _____ a day.

○ one rial ○ two rials ○ forty rials

36. The bus journey to college takes about _____.

○ twenty minutes ○ forty minutes ○ one hour

37. On the bus, Talal usually _____.

○ reads his notes ○ sleeps ○ talks to friends

38. What happened on the bus last Friday?

○ he lost his bus card ○ he could not find a seat ○ the bus broke down

39. The old man on the bus was _____.

○ angry ○ kind ○ embarrassed

40. Talal will visit his uncle _____.

○ next weekend ○ at Eid ○ in September

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READING 3 (Items 41-50) (10 marks)

Read the text, then complete the tasks on the next page.

FROM SAILS TO ENGINES: OMAN'S SEAFARING STORY

For more than a thousand years, the people of Oman have been famous sailors. Long before aeroplanes and cars, Omani ships crossed the Indian Ocean, connecting Arabia with India, Persia and the east coast of Africa. The traditional wooden sailing ship, the dhow, was the heart of this trade.

Building a dhow was a great skill passed from father to son. Craftsmen used no drawings; they knew the shape of the ship by heart. The hull was sewn together with strong coconut rope instead of nails, which made the ship flexible in heavy seas. A large dhow could carry over one hundred tons of goods, and its triangular sails could catch even a light wind.

The most famous Omani sailor of all was Ahmed bin Majid, who lived in the fifteenth century. He wrote more than thirty books and poems about navigation, describing stars, winds, currents and dangerous coasts. Sailors across the Indian Ocean studied his works for centuries. Some historians believe his maps and guides helped European explorers find the sea route to India.

Omani sailors traded frankincense, dates, dried fish and horses for Indian spices, African wood and Chinese porcelain. The port cities of Muscat, Sur and Sohar grew rich from this trade, and the town of Sur became famous for building the finest dhows in the region.

Today, engines have replaced sails, and huge modern ships carry containers instead of spice bags. Yet the old skills have not died. In Sur, craftsmen still build dhows by hand, mostly for tourists and festivals, and every year a traditional sailing race reminds Omanis of the sea that shaped their history.

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READING 3 (continued)

Task One: Write not more than FOUR WORDS OR A NUMBER.

41. What was the traditional sailing ship called?

_____

42. What was the hull sewn with? (material)

_____

43. How much could a large dhow carry?

_____

44. In which century did Ahmed bin Majid live?

_____

45. Which town became famous for building dhows?

_____

46. What reminds Omanis of their sailing history every year?

_____

Task Two: Shade the correct option.

47. Dhow builders worked without _____.

○ drawings ○ tools ○ helpers

48. Coconut rope made the ship _____.

○ faster ○ flexible ○ lighter

49. Ahmed bin Majid wrote about _____.

○ building ships ○ navigation ○ fishing

50. Today, dhows are built mainly for _____.

○ trade with India ○ the fishing industry ○ tourists and festivals

READING SCORE: _____ / 25

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