SECTION A READING

Passage 1: The Search for Cleopatra

Archaeologists search for the true face—and the burial place—of the “world’s first celebrity.”

WHERE, OH WHERE is Cleopatra? She's everywhere, of course—her name immortalized by slot machines, board games, dry cleaners, exotic dancers, and even a Mediterranean pollution-monitoring project. She is orbiting the sun as the asteroid 216 Cleopatra. Her "bath rituals and immoral lifestyle" are credited with inspiring a perfume. Today the woman who ruled as the last pharaoh of Egypt and who is alleged to have tested toxic potions on prisoners is instead poisoning her subjects as the most popular brand of cigarettes in the Middle East.

Ancient historians praised her allure, not her looks. Certainly, she possessed the ability to create passions in two powerful Roman men: Julius Caesar, with whom she had one son; and Mark Antony, who would be her lover for more than a decade and the father of three more children. But her beauty, said Greek historian Plutarch, was not "the sort that would astound those who saw her; interaction with her was captivating, and her appearance, along with her persuasiveness in discussion was stimulating. Pleasure also came with the tone of her voice, and her tongue was like a many-stringed instrument."

People have been puzzling over the whereabouts of Cleopatra's tomb since she was last seen in her mausoleum in the legendary deathbed, described as a golden couch. After Caesar's assassination, his heir Octavian battled Antony for control of the Roman Empire for more than a decade; following Antony and Cleopatra's defeat at Actium, Octavian's forces entered Alexandria in the summer of 30 B.C. Cleopatra barricaded herself behind her mausoleum's massive doors, amid stores of gold, silver, pearls, art, and other treasures that she vowed to torch in case they fall into Roman hands.

It was to the mausoleum that Antony, dying of self-inflicted sword wounds, was brought so he might take a last sip of wine and perish in Cleopatra's arms. And it may have been in the mausoleum where, ten days or so after Antony's death, Cleopatra herself escaped the humiliation of defeat and captivity by committing suicide at the age of 39, reputedly with the venom of a snake. The Roman historian Cassius reported that Cleopatra's body was embalmed as Antony's had been, and Plutarch noted that on the orders of Octavian, the last queen of Egypt was buried beside her defeated Roman partner. Sixteen centuries later Shakespeare proclaimed: "No grave upon the earth shall clip in it / a pair so famous."
And yet we have no idea where that grave might be. And no wonder: Earthquakes, tidal waves, rising seas, subsiding ground, civil conflicts, and the recycling of building stones have destroyed the ancient quarter where for three centuries Cleopatra and her ancestors lived. Most of the glory that was ancient Alexandria now lies about 20 feet underwater.

Adapted from: https://www.nationalgeographic.com/magazine/2011/07/Cleopatra/

EXERCISE A: Choose the best answer a, b, c or d

1. **Archaeologists are trying to**
   a. explain why Cleopatra was a celebrity.
   b. identify what she looked like and where her tomb is.
   c. find her star orbiting the Sun.
   d. explain why so many slot machines bear her name.

2. **Cleopatra poisoned people with**
   a. a famous brand of cigarettes.
   b. toxic potions.
   c. snake venom.
   d. bath rituals.

3. **Cleopatra astonished people with**
   a. her beauty.
   b. her talent to play so many instruments.
   c. her passion for men.
   d. her pleasing and exciting qualities.

4. **People are puzzled over**
   a. the exact number of Cleopatra’s children.
   b. Caesar’s assassination.
   c. the exact location of her tomb.
   d. her defeat at Actium.

5. **Anthony**
   a. committed suicide.
   b. was poisoned by Cleopatra.
   c. was killed by Octavian.
   d. was bitten by a snake.

EXERCISE B. Some of the following statements contain wrong information.

REWRITE the wrong ones to make them correct according to the passage. Put a TICK (√) if the statements are correct.

(5x1=5 marks)

1. Cleopatra committed suicide because she couldn’t bear her husband’s loss.
   ______________________________________________________

2. Cleopatra’s body was mummified after her death.
   ______________________________________________________

3. Cleopatra was buried next to Octavian.
   ______________________________________________________

4. Natural disasters and people are responsible for the destruction of the royal palace.
   ______________________________________________________

5. There is a possibility that the tomb is underwater.
   ______________________________________________________
Yuri Gagarin: First Man in Space

Yuri Gagarin was the first person to fly in space. His flight, on April 12, 1961, lasted 108 minutes as he circled the Earth for a little more than one orbit in the Soviet Union's Vostok spacecraft.

Gagarin's flight came at a time when the United States and the Soviet Union were competing for technological supremacy in space. The Soviet Union had already sent the first artificial satellite, called Sputnik, into space in October 1957. Before Gagarin's mission, the Soviets sent a test flight into space using a prototype of the Vostok spacecraft. During this flight, they sent a life-size dummy called Ivan Ivanovich and a dog named Zvezdochka into space. After the test flight, the Soviet's considered the vessel fit to take a human into space. Gagarin, a 27-year-old senior lieutenant at the time, was among the pilots selected.

On April 12, 1961, at 9:07 a.m. Moscow time, the Vostok 1 spacecraft blasted off from the Soviets' launch site. Because no one was certain how weightlessness would affect a pilot, the spherical capsule had little in the way of onboard controls; the work was done either automatically or from the ground. If an emergency arose, Gagarin was supposed to receive an override code that would allow him to take manual control, but Sergei Korolev, chief designer of the Soviet space program, disregarded protocol and gave the code to the pilot prior to the flight. Over the course of 108 minutes, Vostok 1 travelled around the Earth once, reaching a maximum height of 203 miles (327 kilometres). The spacecraft carried 10 days' worth of provisions in case the engines failed, and Gagarin was required to wait for the orbit to naturally decay. But the supplies were unnecessary. Gagarin re-entered Earth's atmosphere, managing to maintain consciousness as he experienced forces up to eight times the pull of gravity during his descent.

Vostok 1 had no engines to slow its re-entry and no way to land safely. About 4 miles (7 km) up, Gagarin ejected from the spacecraft and parachuted to Earth. In order for the mission to be counted as an official spaceflight, the Fédération Aéronautique Internationale (FAI), the governing body for aerospace records, had determined that the pilot must land with the spacecraft. Soviet leaders indicated that Gagarin had touched down with the Vostok 1, and they did not reveal that he had ejected until 1971. Regardless, Gagarin still set the record as the first person to leave Earth's orbit and travel into space.

Upon his return to Earth, Gagarin was a national hero. A cheering crowd of hundreds of thousands of people greeted him in Red Square, a public plaza in Moscow. A national treasure, Gagarin travelled around the world to celebrate the historic Soviet achievement. Because the Soviets did not want to risk losing such an important public figure, they were hesitant about allowing Gagarin to return to space. He continued to make test flights for the Air Force, however. On March 27, 1968, Gagarin was killed while test-piloting a jet fighter aircraft.

Even today, more than six decades after the historic flight, Gagarin is widely celebrated in Russian space museums, with numerous artefacts and statues displayed in his honour.

1. Gagarin was the first man who flew in a spaceship. ________
2. In 1961, the USA and the USSR were working together for technological advancement in space. ________
3. Trials had been carried out before Gagarin was sent to space. ________
4. Gagarin stayed in space for ten days. ________
5. The first orbit around the Earth lasted less than two hours. ________

A. Answer the following questions. (5 marks)

1. Mention two things Gagarin did first.
   ________________________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________________________

2. Give three examples to prove that Gagarin was a national hero.
   ________________________________________________________________________________
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The Portable Trashpresso

This Guy Is Making Furniture and Buildings Out of Your Trash

How many objects in your vicinity contain recycled material? Probably none. Engineer Arthur Huang is trying to change this by designing new materials from trash—to be used in making furniture, buildings, and even airplanes.

“Forget Bitcoin. The hottest potential new currency lies in our trash bins,” says Arthur Huang, a National Geographic emerging explorer, and he’s built a portable recycling plant to prove it. His solar-powered Trashpresso turns plastic waste into small tiles that can be used to build walls and floors.

“These machines are a prototype of what we think the future of recycling should be,” says Huang. He has fully built two Trashpresso machines so far, hauling them by truck on 40-foot platforms to remote places like Yushu, a county on the Tibetan Plateau. Film star Jackie Chan features the expedition in his National Geographic television documentary Green Heroes.

No matter where a Trashpresso goes, it finds plenty of plastic to shred and compress: Yushu was no different. “That microcosm of a tiny township has exactly the same problem as big cities,” Huang says. Water bottles and other trash, often brought in by visitors, end up in rivers and eventually the oceans.

Huang imagines a network of hyperlocal trash-processing plants generating new products—and new ideas. His company, Miniwiz, is devoted to building such a circular economy. Since 2005, it has been transforming waste into furniture, accessories, buildings, even a small airplane—and encouraging people to think about packaging as a valuable commodity.

PASSAGE 3: SUMMARY WRITING

The article is about Arthur Huang an emerging explorer and his invention. You have been asked to produce a summary to be published in the school magazine.

Write your summary in about 100 words. (15 marks)

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Content  _____/6  
Language form _____/6  
Organization _____/3  
Total _______
WRITING TASK 1: (15 marks)

Write a letter to a friend about a talented person you have met or read about. In your letter you should say:

- who this person is and what makes him/her special,
- your thoughts and feelings regarding this person.

Write between 120 - 150 words.

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WRITING TASK 2: (20 marks)

“Life without love is like a tree without blossoms or fruit” - Khalil Gibran

. Write an article for the local newspaper in **150-180 words**, stating your opinion on the matter.