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FEMSSISA ENGLISH OLYMPIAD:
GRADE 8

DATE: 19 - 23 SEPTEMBER 2022

TIME: 75 MINUTES

Instructions:

1. This booklet has 6 questions.
2. Answer on the paper below.
3. Read the questions carefully before answering.
4. Visit the websites: www.saolympiads.co.za.

NAME OF LEARNER:	
SCHOOL:	GRADE:

QUESTION ONE

Read the passage (Text A) below and then answer the questions by choosing the correct option for each answer.

TEXT A: BAOBAB, TREE OF LIFE:

An elephant lumbers across African grassland as dust rises up from each of her steps. She finds a giant tree and works to pierce its thick bark with her tusks. She is prying and poking to get at the water that the tree often stores inside. This is no ordinary tree but a baobab, a tree that looms large in size and importance for both the animals and people of Africa.

The baobab's astonishing appearance alone proves it is special. It can grow up to 35 meters high and 12 meters wide, soaring above most other life in the dry savannah. The baobab has a wide barrel-like trunk topped with shorter, twisted branches. It only grows leaves for two short periods, giving the branches the appearance of **gnarled** roots for most of the year. In fact, some African legends say that a god angry at the baobab, decided to uproot and replant it upside down.

This remarkable tree survives dry conditions and is found in many regions of Africa. Its roots spread out up to 30 meters away to gather needed water. The adaptable sponge-like bark contracts in dry months and expands in wet ones. Baobab trees serve as a source of water, food, and a safe home for a variety of animals. In particular, the white-backed vulture, with a wingspan of about 2 and a half meters, nests high in the baobab's branches. The great bird nests only once a year, laying just one egg. The tall, strong baobab provides the ideal site for several months of safety for the mother and baby vulture.

For centuries, the baobab has also been essential to the people in various parts of Africa, many of whom call this tree the, "Tree of Life". The baobab's immense trunk is hollow, creating a large circular chamber at the center. Baobab chambers have been used as shelters, prisons, and animal stables. The tree's spinach-like leaves can be eaten, and people use them for both food and medicine - the fruit provides a citrus-like refreshment. People strip off the fibrous bark to make rope, cloth, roofing, and paper. Unlike most other trees, the baobab can endure this practice, regenerating its bark and continuing to grow.

Perhaps this is one reason baobabs have such incredible **longevity.** Some of these trees have even been known to live for over 2 000 years! These amazing survivors continue to provide valuable resources across 32 countries in Africa.

Answer the following questions based on Text A. Circle the answer that you choose:

1. **What is the main idea of this passage?**

(a) The baobab tree can survive for thousands of years.
(b) The baobab tree is home to the white-backed vulture.
(c) The baobab tree is important for both animals and people in Africa.
(d) The baobab tree is used as a water source for animals like the elephant.

(1)

2. **What functions of the Baobab tree does the elephant's actions in the first paragraph highlight? Tick all that apply.**

☐ The baobab absorbs water.

☐ The baobab provides a safe place to stay.

☐ The baobab gives life to animals.

☐ The baobab trunk is used for shelter.

☐ The baobab lives for thousands of years.

(4)

3. **What other word from paragraph 2 is a synonym for the word "gnarled"?**

(a) angry
(b) soaring
(c) special
(d) twisted

(1)

4. **In paragraph two, how does the phrase, "soaring above" help to explain Baobabs?**

(a) It emphasizes the tree's height.
(b) It highlights the size of their leaves.
(c) It shows why birds nest in their branches.
(d) It proves that rope is needed to climb them. **(1)**

5. What was the writer's intention in terms of writing this text?

(a) to entertain the readers
(b) to inform readers
(c) to give readers advice
(d) to produce a one-sided argument about the tree

(1)

6. The Baobab is called the, "Tree of Life" because…:

(a) It lives such a long, long time.
(b) It stores precious water inside of its trunk.
(c) People use many different parts of it for different purposes.
(d) The leaves can be used for food and medicine.

(1)

7. Why does the writer bring statistics to the fore when he states, "Some of these trees have even been known to live for over 2 000 years!"

(a) To validate the argument that the trees have long life spans.
(b) To show the plants that can even grow in dry regions of Africa.
(c) To establish how angry the God the tree was.
(d) To emphasise that only a couple of trees grow in a year

(1)

Marks: 10

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QUESTION TWO:

Provide an appropriate ANTONYM for each of the following words:

(a) Abundant

(b) Achieve

(c) Arrogant

(d) Occasionally

(e) Hinder

(f) Temporary

(6)

QUESTION THREE:

Write down the PART OF SPEECH for each of the underlined words in the following sentence:

The very old man wandered quite slowly across the busy road and everyone

was extremely worried that he would not make it to the other side.

(10)

QUESTION FOUR: LOGIC

a) A boy and a doctor were fishing. The boy is the doctor's son, but the doctor isn't the boy's father. Who is the doctor?

(1)

b) The class of students are going to go for an excursion.

Correct the error or concord in the above sentence. **(1)**

QUESTION FIVE: REBUS

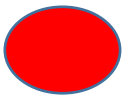
This means seeing a common phrase from the picture given

e.g. MAN = The common phrase "Man Overboard"

BOARD

SOLVE THE FOLLOWING: Put the pictures and words together to form a commonly used idiom

SECRET



(2)

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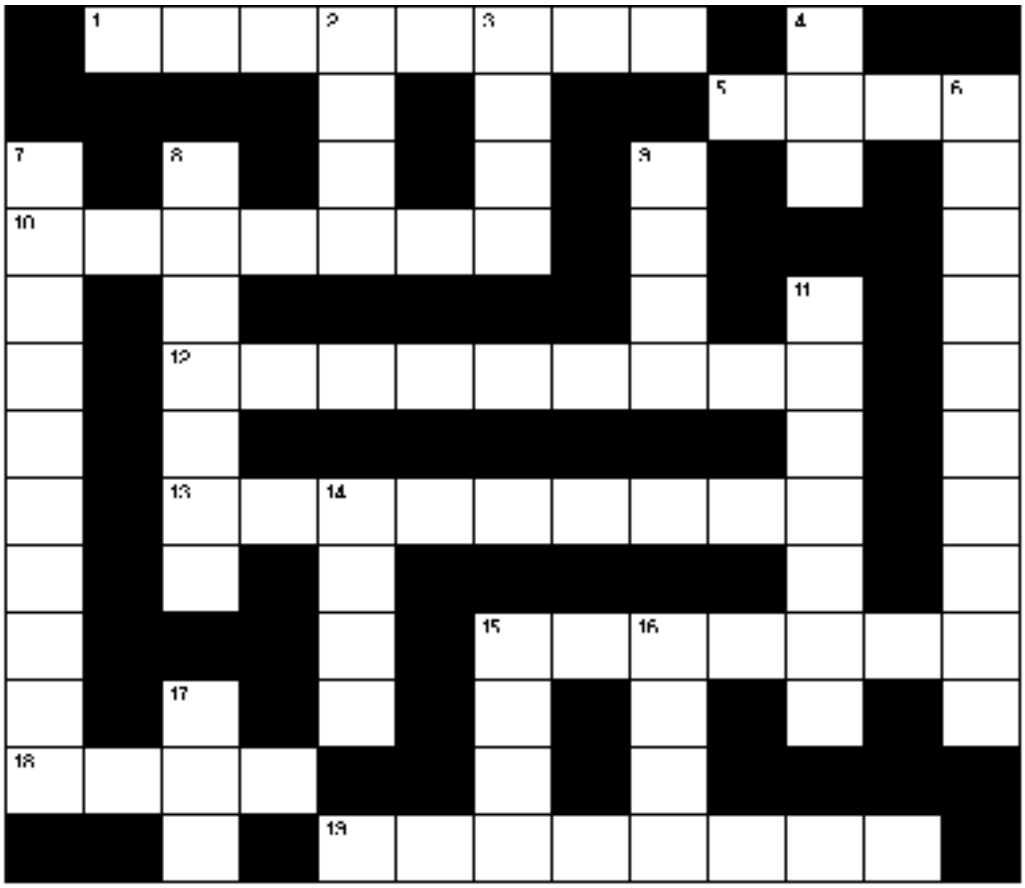
QUESTION SIX: CROSSWORD - ADJECTIVES



ACROSS:

1. Feeling appreciative or showing gratitude (8)
5. Firm and solid, difficult (4)
10. Existing always, without an end (7)
12. A detailed type of drawing used in Engineering (9)
13. Having high rank or authority (9)
15. Unusual, peculiar (7)
18. Morally bad, wicked (4)
19. Without somewhere to reside (8)

DOWN:

2. Lean, narrow, fine (4).
3. Holding all limits will allow (4)
4. Inferior, unpleasant (3)
6. Firm and resolute (10)
7. Having sound judgment, using good reason (10)
8. Confident and convinced (7)
9. Grand, heroic e.g. Battles (4)
11. Unashamed behaviour, done openly (7)
14. Lacking adequate money (4)
15. Of narrow shape (opposite of fat) (4)
16. Synonym for non-fiction (4)
17. Antonym for small (3)

(20)

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ACROSS
1
5.
10.
12.
13.
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19.
DOWN
2.
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TOTAL FOR PAPER: 50