

**GENERAL EDUCATION DIPLOMA EXAMINATION
ELECTIVE ENGLISH
SEMESTER ONE — FIRST SESSION**

TIME: 3 hours

TOTAL MARKS: 70

This paper has 3 pages

READING 1 (Items 1 – 6)

Read the text. Then for each question, write a short answer (**not more than THREE WORDS**).

If you ever visit the USA and want to experience the real America, I suggest that you visit the Posen Potato Festival. Posen is in the northern state of Michigan, not far from the Canadian border. It's a tiny place, with a population of only three hundred. The great-great grandparents of most of these families came from Poland in the middle of the nineteenth century, and Polish traditions are still very strong.

One of these traditions is potato-growing. Poland used to be the world's leading potato producer, although now that position is held by China. When they came to the USA one hundred and fifty years ago and settled in places like Michigan, the Poles brought this tradition with them, which is one reason why Michigan is the country's leading producer of potatoes.

The Posen Potato Festival, which has been held every year for the last fifty-seven years, is a celebration of this tradition. Every September, this normally quiet village is transformed into a hive of activity. For three days, the place is filled with parades, carnivals, traditional costumes, family fun, live music, dancing and, of course, food. However, for the local people, the highlight of the whole festival is definitely the potato cooking competition, which is always 'hotly' contested!

Last year's festival was rather special, because the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) had officially named 2008 as the International Year of the Potato. In order to promote this highly nutritious vegetable, the FAO ran a special worldwide photography competition. Unfortunately, the winner of the four-thousand dollar prize was not from Posen, but from Ireland!

1. How many people live in Posen? _____
2. Which country did they originally come from? _____
3. When was the first festival held? _____ *years ago*
4. What is the most important event in the festival? _____
5. What kind of competition did the UN recently organise? _____
6. Which country grows the most potatoes in the world? _____

Write your answers on your answer paper.

READING 2 (Items 7 – 10)

Read these four texts. What are they about? For each text, choose one of the items in the box. Write **A, B, C**, etc, as in the example. (There are two extra items in the box.)

e.g. After the match, the coach said he was very pleased with the way the team had played.

F

A Tourism

B History

C Environment

D Business

E Entertainment

F Sport

G Weather

7. A recent rise in the price of raw materials has caused many problems for manufacturers. _____
8. The prize is awarded annually for the best screen performance by a male actor. _____
9. The tomb also contains several items of jewellery which were buried with the queen. _____
10. Satellite pictures of the region showed that twelve thousand square kms of forest were destroyed last year, 4% higher than the previous year. _____

WRITING 1

Write a PARAGRAPH about **the State Opera House**. Use the picture and ALL the information in the box. Your writing should be correct and well-organised.

State Opera House

1,500 seats rebuild/ reopen/ 1951
200 performances/ year
centre/ Vienna open/ 1869
famous/ musicians/ singers
capital city/ Austria
destroy/ fire/ 2nd World War



WRITING 2

Write a letter of at least 75 words.

Situation: Your British penfriend, Paul/ Paula, has written to you about outdoor activities in the UK. Reply to his/ her letter. Describe the **outdoor activities** that are popular with young people in Oman.

Your letter should be friendly, informative and interesting.
Your name is Nasr/Nasra. Do **not** write an address.

Write your answers on your answer paper.

WRITING 3

Write a **story** of at least 100 words based on the following pictures.

You can use the words in the box to help you.

You can also put in more details to make your story lively and interesting.

holiday	engine/ fire	crash	mountains
small child	carry	village	TV/ interview

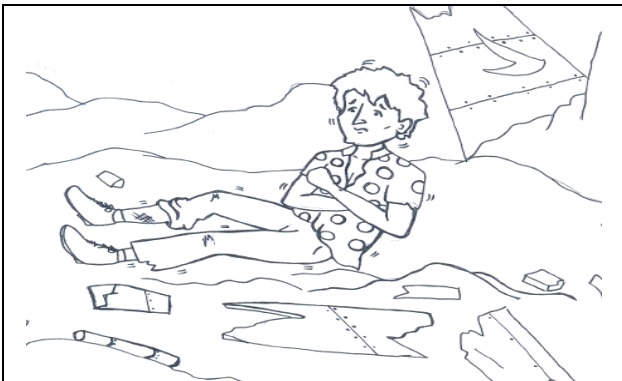
①



②



③



④



⑤



⑥



Write your answers on your answer paper.