READ THE TEXT CAREFULLY AND ANSWER THE QUESTIONS BELOW:

THE RACE TO THE POLE

On 1 June 1910, Captain Scott left London to begin his Antarctic expedition. On his way, he received a telegram from the Norwegian explorer Roald Amundsen. I’m going South. So the race to the South Pole was on!

During the polar summer of 1910-11, both teams organised food depots in preparation for their expeditions the following year. Then came the total darkness of the polar winter. Scott and Amundsen waited impatiently for the first signs of spring.

Amundsen was the first to leave, on 15 October, 1911. He had teams of dogs pulling the sledges and all his men were on skis. Because of this, he made rapid progress. Scott left on 1 November and soon had problems. First, his two motor sledges broke down, and then the ponies began to have serious difficulties with the snow and the cold. After a while, Scott and his men had to push the sledges themselves.

Amundsen reached the Pole on 14 December and put a Norwegian flag there. Then he prepared for the return journey. Scott finally arrived at the Pole with four companions on 17 January. They were devastated when they saw the Norwegian flag. Scott wrote bitterly in his diary:

“Well, we have now lost the goal of our ambition and must face 800 miles of hard pushing – and goodbye to most of our dreams.”

The return journey was one of the worst in the history of exploration. The men were soon exhausted and were running out of food. The weather conditions were terrible. Scott started to realise their desperate situation.

“Amongst ourselves we are very cheerful but what each man feels in his heart I can only guess. Putting on our shoes in the morning is getting slower and slower.”

Despite this, on their way back they found time to look for rocks and all fossils. They carried 20 kilos of rocks all the way with them. Later, these rocks proved that at one time in the distant past Antarctica was covered by plants.

However, disaster soon struck. Edgar Evans had terrible frostbite and died after a bad fall. The next to go was Captain Oates, who was having great difficulty walking. Scott recorded his death:

“He said: ‘I’m just going outside and I may be some time.’ We knew that poor Oates was walking to his death, but though we tried to stop him, we knew that it was the act of a brave man and an English gentleman. We all hope to meet the end with a similar spirit.”

Scott and two companions carried on and got within eleven miles of one of their food depots. But then a terrible storm started and they could not leave their tent. Scott spent some of his last hours writing. He wrote a letter full of sadness to his wife Kathleen:

“To my Widow, I could tell you lots and lots about this journey. What stories you have for the boys... but what a price to pay.”

Scott’s final diary entry told the story of their end:

“The depot is only 11 miles away, but I do not think we can hope for any better things now. We are getting weaker and weaker and the end can’t be far. I do not think I can write more.”

The news of Scott’s death shocked the world. He had failed to win the race to the Pole but the remarkable courage shown by Captain Scott and his men made them into heroes.
Total mark: 10 points

1. Are these statements TRUE or FALSE? Reason your answer. Use your OWN words. (2.5 points: 0.5 point each)

1. Scott and Amundsen started their journey in the polar spring.

2. Scott’s use of motor sledges and ponies was a success.

3. Amundsen travelled more quickly than Scott.

4. When they got to the Pole, Scott’s expedition had a celebration.

5. Captain Oates went for a walk and got lost in a snow storm.

2. Match these words to their definitions; Write the word on the right of its definition. (2.5 points: 0.25 each)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>expedition</td>
<td>a place where things are stored</td>
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<tr>
<td>depot</td>
<td>a journey organised for a special purpose</td>
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<tr>
<td>devastated</td>
<td>difficult and dangerous</td>
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<tr>
<td>bitterly</td>
<td>shock and sad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>spirit</td>
<td>courage and strength</td>
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<td>ambition</td>
<td>remarkable</td>
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<td>desperate</td>
<td>in a good mood</td>
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<td>cheerful</td>
<td>something you want to achieve</td>
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<tr>
<td>frosthite</td>
<td>extraordinary</td>
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<tr>
<td>frozen fingers and toes</td>
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3. Read the text again and answer these questions. Use your OWN words. (5 points)

1. Why did Amundsen succeed and Scott fail? (0.5 point)

2. What did Scott’s expedition achieve? (0.5 point)

3. Why did Scott and his men become heroes? (0.5 point)

4. How did you feel when you read this story? (0.5 point)

5. Write about an exciting journey you have made. 50 words (3 points)