SECTION B: READING COMPREHENSION
(25 marks)

Read the text and, on your language paper, answer the questions about it.

Androcles and the Lion

It happened in ancient times that a slave named Androcles escaped from his master and fled into the forest, and he wandered there for a long time until he was weary and almost dead from hunger and despair.

As he lay resting beneath a tree, he heard a lion near him moaning and groaning and at times roaring terribly. Even though he was so weak, Androcles got up and rushed away.

But as he hurried through the bushes he stumbled over the root of a tree and fell down twisting his ankle. When he tried to get up, he saw the lion coming towards him, limping on three feet and holding his forepaw in front of him.

Looking more closely at it, Androcles saw a great big thorn pressed into the paw, which was the cause of all the lion’s trouble. Plucking up courage, he seized hold of the thorn and drew it of the lion’s paw.

The great beast roared with pain when the thorn came out, but soon after found such relief that he rubbed up against Androcles and showed, in every way that he knew, that he was truly thankful for being relieved from such pain.

Instead of eating Androcles up, he brought him a young deer that he had killed, and Androcles managed to make a meal from it. For some time, the lion continued to bring what he had killed to share with Androcles, who became fond of the huge beast.

But their happy association did not last. One day a number of soldiers came marching through the forest and found Androcles, and as he could not explain what he was doing, they took him prisoner and brought him back to the town from which he had fled.
Here his master soon found him and brought him before the authorities, and he was condemned to death because he had fled.

It used to be the custom to throw murderers and other criminals to the lions in a huge circus, so that the public could enjoy the spectacle of a combat between them and the wild beasts.

So Androcles was condemned to be thrown to the lions, and on the appointed day he was led forth into the Arena and left there alone with only a spear to protect him from the lion. The Emperor was in the royal box that day and gave the signal for the lion to come out and attack Androcles.

But when the great beast came out of its cage and got near Androcles, what do you think it did? Instead of attacking him, it rubbed up against him and stroked him with its paw and made no attempt to do him any harm.

originally told by Aesop