a/ Candidates must describe Ismail’s society and give examples of its customs and traditions. Any of these are acceptable as long as the examples are from the book. Candidates should then comment on the positive and negative aspects of these with reference to examples from the book.

b/ These can be discussed in both a tangible and metaphorical sense. Ismail is an eye specialist, and he is returning to cure the country of its blindness to modernity and science. Fatima is blind – tangible and she also represents the blindness of the country – metaphorical. Other instances include Ismail’s teacher, who describes his country as being that of the blind. Candidates do not have to mention every example, but they should comment on the role of this theme to the story and give reasons.