Paper 1 mini mock: wereworld

Source A: The opening of a book titled 'Wereworld: the Shadow of the Hawk' by Curtis Jobling (2012)

The drivers cracked their whips, urging the procession of wagons and horses onwards and away from the curving cliff edge. The wagon wheels found their way into the ancient ruts worn into the dark rock road by centuries of traffic. To the people of the island the circling road was known as the Black Staircase, running all the way from the harbour below, through the city, around the mountainous island.

Drew pushed his face against the bamboo bars, looking down the cliff as the wagon he travelled in drove ever higher. There were six of them in the jail wagon, each equally miserable. No doubt Drew's fellow slaves had been picked up by Kesslar on his travels, and each bore the scars of the journey. Battered and beaten, the men were weary with exhaustion and the long time spent in the hold of the slave ship. The Goatlord Kesslar travelled at the front of the procession in a sumptuous[1] caravan, his ill-gotten gains of blood, flesh and bone following miserably behind.

The Black Staircase had risen from the docks through the strange city, past bazaars and merchants' stalls, before winding through the town houses higher up. Far below in the harbour Drew spied the Banshee, bobbing lazily in the crystal clear water, her cargo delivered.

At the highest point of the Black Staircase there was no sign of vegetation, the slopes of the mountain were covered with rocks and boulders as dark as jet. The road levelled out briefly as they reached the summit, turning in toward the mountain's centre. Here the wagons passed through a tall, white gatehouse. Lightly armoured guards stood to either side, inspecting the carts and their slaves as they trundled past. The people of the island reminded Drew of Djogo, Kesslar's captain, tall and rangy with dark, leathery skin. Perhaps this is where the brute hails from?

The wagons were moving downhill now into a bowl-shaped valley that marked the mountain's summit, a palace sitting at its centre. An outer wall curved round the grand palace structure, echoing the concentric circles of the Black Staircase. Terracotta rooftops dipped in towards its centre, the courtyard beyond not yet visible on the approach. Towers thrust up from the outer wall towards the clouds, their brickwork an ornate tapestry of black and white banded marble. The heat was oppressive[2]; Drew felt it roll over him in waves. Occasional jets of steam broke through fissures in the ground on either side of the road, and hot gases belched violently from the earth. He held his hand to his mouth, gagging at a familiar scent in the air.

"Brimstone," he said, as much to himself as to anyone who might listen.

"That's right," said another slave, leaning against the bars on the opposite side of the wagon. "Sulphur. What else would you expect from a volcano?"

If the heat outdoors was stifling, inside the palace it was unbearable. Guards had led the shackled slaves into the colossal building, past crowds of onlookers into a huge, circular hall. Stone tables ringed the room, littered with food from the previous night's feasting. Flies buzzed over discarded pieces of meat, adding to the grim atmosphere. Torches burned along the wall, while a large metal grille covered the centre of the chamber, riveted in place to the polished basalt floor. A steady flow of steam emerged through the grating, turning the chamber into a sauna. A metal brazier, stacked with red-hot coals, stood beside the grille, long-handled brands buried deep within the glowing embers. Drew winced as he spied it, imagining what they might be used for.

1 sumptuous: luxurious, expensive 2 oppressive: overpowering, unbearable

Questions

Q1 – 4 marks – 5 minutes

Use lines 1-6.

List four things you learn about Drew's journey.

Q2– 8 marks – 10 minutes

Using lines 6-11.

How does the writer use language to describe the slaves?

Q4 – 20 marks – 25 minutes

Use lines 12-40.

A student said, "I like how the writer creates a vivid picture of the place, not only describing what we can see in detail but using the other senses too."

To what extent do you agree?

In your response, you could:

- write your own impressions about the characters

Q3– 8 marks – 10 minutes Use the whole source. How does the writer structure the text to interest you as a reader?	• evaluate how the writer has created these impressions • support your opinions with references to the text.