Cultural Brief

Here is some information about the kuuk thaayorre to help you complete this test:

* The kuuk thaayorre system of counting only goes to three, after which the word “mong”, meaning “many” is used for any number above.
* A lunar month is not calculated as a specific number of weeks, there are ‘very many’ cycles of the moon each year.
* The kuuk thaayorre speakers early experience with tobacco was with "stick" tobacco, which looks like the branch of a tree.
* Crocodiles, turtles, birds and frill necked lizards are all classified as minh (which broadly might be translated as animals).   Snakes along with eels are classified as yak which may be broadly translated as snake-like creatures.
* “May” is the class of objects which includes all vegetable food.  Even witchetty grubs that are found in the roots of trees fall under this rubric - so does honey which is also associated with trees and hence fruit.  The kuuk thaayorre language had no problem fitting flour into the may category since it obviously resembled some of their own processed vegetable foods (e.g., yams like Dioscoria sativa elongata).  The word may can also mean sweet and hence sugar, which of course does not resemble anything in their traditional culinary.
* The kuuk thaayore language has no word for “drink” – they eat everything!
* For the kuuk thaayorre, an avoidance taboo operates between mother's brother and sister's son and politeness requires that sister's son should never directly face mother's brother nor talk to him directly in company.
* Among the kuuk thaayorre God has been equated with a mythological character and he is definitely non-malevolent.  Both fate and germs are concepts foreign to the kuuk thaayorre belief system.  No-one dies without reason and suicide is unknown to them.
* Emu is a food that may be consumed only by very old people.  Kangaroos (especially large ones) may not be eaten by parents or their children.  The children will get sick otherwise.
* Some relationships, such as between a male and his father’s sister’s daughter, are called poisonous in Aboriginal English, and must be avoided like the plague.