



General Certificate of Education
Advanced Subsidiary Examination
January 2010

General Studies (Specification A)

GENA1

Unit 1 AS Culture and Society

Source Booklet

Sources for use with **Questions 1.1 to 1.30** and **Questions 2 to 4**.

Section A**Passage for Questions 1.1 to 1.30**

Source A**Behind all these great actors is subsidised theatre**

- (1) Dear Helen Mirren, Dear Judi Dench, Dear Peter O'Toole. Tomorrow night, if you get your Oscars, would you please make a point of thanking not just your mums and your directors in your acceptance speech but also us, the British taxpayers, and our government?
- (2) You are what you are principally because of your wonderful talents. But you are also where you are because of the subsidised theatre. All of you have reached the eminence you now enjoy in part because you were given a start and learned your art in theatres that prosper only because of government support.
- (3) Helen, Judi, Peter, you stand in glory at the summit of your profession. But you know best of all that beneath you the British theatre is teeming with talent and creativity. This week I saw a truly thrilling production of a fascinating new play, Nicholas Wright's *The Reporter*, at the National Theatre. Ben Chaplin's performance as Jim Mossman and Richard Eyre's direction were both award-worthy by anybody's standards. The other day in Stratford, I watched Jonathan Slinger's mesmerising Richard III in Michael Boyd's Shakespeare history plays project with the Royal Shakespeare Company. People like these are the Oscar nominees of the future.
- (4) And it's not just the glamour companies that are thriving. There is so much going on in the regional theatre that it is impossible to keep up. Theatre in places like Sheffield, Birmingham and Watford (my local) has rarely been better. But it is not happening by accident or as a result of divine providence, any more than your Oscar nominations or the British triumphs at the Broadway Tony awards last year dropped from a clear blue sky. This country's incredible artistic dynamism is directly related to the fact that the nation has invested in it.
- (5) The regional theatre is a really good example of all this. In the 1990s, a lot of regional theatres were hanging on by their fingernails. But then Chris Smith, Culture Secretary, persuaded Gordon Brown, Chancellor of the Exchequer, to find another £25m for them. The Arts Council held a review of how best to use it. The outcome is the widespread theatrical rejuvenation we see around us today: more jobs, more performances, lots of new writing, and now a turnaround in the previous decline in theatre audiences. As a result, theatres that were losing £2.1m a year in 2001 have built a steady surplus that can reduce debt and be reinvested in growth. And the next generation of Chaplins and Slingers are now on their way.
- (6) Nicholas Hytner, who has done so much for this process as director of the National Theatre, got it absolutely right when his production of *The History Boys* scooped the pool in New York last year. "We got £16.5m from the British taxpayer," he said then. "I am certain that if there were a theatre in this city that got the equivalent from the American taxpayer, they would be as productive, interesting and as vital to the life of this city as I hope we are to London."
- (7) But it's not just the theatre. You could tell the same success story about music, or about dance or about museums and galleries. It is not an accident that the Russian conductor, Valery Gergiev, has chosen to work in London, or that Cuban dancer Carlos Acosta has done the same at the Royal Ballet. Overall, Labour has doubled the amount of public money that is spent on the arts since 1997.

(8) The return has come in the shape of more performances, bigger attendances, more jobs, higher turnovers, a broadening of activities and – make no mistake about this – better arts. You can measure some of these things impressively: 42 million visits, 76% of adults attending the arts in some way. But the effect on a generation of a single phrase – Alan Bennett’s haunting “Pass it on” – is simply beyond all measuring.

(9) Be clear, though, what the story is and also what it isn’t. Yes, it is about spending more in order to get more back. But the point is not that the Blair government has lavished vast amounts of money on anyone in the arts who asks for it. In Britain, we still spend less than half the amount per head on culture that France, Germany, Italy or Sweden spend. What the government has done, at last, is to spend enough – neither too little nor too much – but enough to ensure the arts can generate the virtuous circles of investment and creativity.

(10) These, however, are now suddenly at risk as Treasury officials working on the three-year spending review have asked the Arts Council to look at a 5% cut in arts spending in each of the three years starting from April 2008. That would mean the end of English National Opera (which won both Olivier awards for opera this week), the death of at least one orchestra and the closure of lots of regional theatres. The museums have been told to look at an even bigger annual cut of 7%. The shutting of the Theatre Museum in Covent Garden would be the harbinger of a much larger cull.

(11) This would be an act of devastation. Even in a spending review in which all other departmental budgets are being subordinated to health, education and defence, these would be eye-watering losses. Which is why, instinct says, it is probably designed to scare the arts into accepting something that may appear, by comparison, less draconian. Yet even that alternative, a cash-standstill budget until 2011, would still be a cut in real terms. Inflation and the likelihood of further raids on the lottery to pay for the Olympics would between them ensure there would be less arts spending and therefore less arts.

(12) Dear Gordon Brown, Dear Tessa Jowell (Minister for Culture, Media and Sport), Dear Tony Blair (Prime Minister). You have a good record on the arts. You have helped to rebuild something that was broken. The current arts boom and global successes are partly down to you. But you know that some in the arts believe anything hostile they hear about this government. Look at this month’s intemperate and untrue editorial in *Opera* magazine, for example. David Cameron (Leader of the Conservative Party) smells blood in the water, which is why he circles the arts world, appointing the revered John Tusa (Director of London’s famous Barbican Arts Centre) to his policy review.

(13) I gather that, far later than you ought, you now have plans to celebrate the successes in the arts. But you would be crazy to alienate such people still further by cutting the arts budget. You above all, Mr Brown, have a huge opportunity and a major incentive to reclaim the arts. A well-timed inflation-pegged increase would not just be the right thing to do in principle. It would also be a potent act of political self-interest.

Source: Adapted from an article by MARTIN KETTLE, *The Guardian*, 24 February 2007

Section B

Sources for Questions 2 to 4

Read Sources B to D on the media and answer Questions 2 to 4.

Source B

It's easy to forget as we bullet down the information superhighway, but 67% of British people still get most, or all, of their news from the old-fangled flashing box called television. But something sad is happening on that box: politics – the democratic debate that determines our fate – is slowly, steadily disappearing, or being rendered ever-more useless. This weekend another light went out. The BBC axed 'Head 2 Head', one of its best politics shows. Much of what remains is also being corrupted. The BBC has given almost all its high-profile politics slots to Andrew Neil whose bias is increasingly outrageous.

What is the effect on British politics when television coverage is distorted or disappears? Democracy doesn't work properly. Vital issues simply aren't explained to the public so we cannot vote intelligently. TV channels, too, are often owned by the super-rich like Murdoch or Berlusconi who would use 'their' channels to push their politics. The real issues, like global warming, would be garbled even more than they are now.

Source: Adapted from JOHANN HARI, 'I like to be informed but TV's not helping', *The Independent*, 3 April 2008

Source C

An Australian government initiative promoting the use of censorware to police the internet recently suffered a collision with reality when a teenager was reported to have immediately been able to bypass the system. There's a similarity here to the difficulties concerning enforcing digital restrictions on music or movies. With access to a computer, someone can learn to dismantle protective software and one person's discovery may then be readily used by others.

We're certainly seeing how censorship can be a slippery slope. It is easy for governments to create blacklists of websites covering child pornography, excessive violence, extreme religious and political views, or detailed instructions in crime or drug use. Some politicians have even proposed adding pro-anorexia sites to the blacklist. As such, blacklists are often secret. Sites could be added without any public discussion.

But any attempt at effectively keeping people from reading prohibited sites must not only ban those sites themselves, but a whole range of useful third-party sites that allow readers to access censored web pages. Such sites include those devoted to protecting privacy and anonymity. Furthermore, software developed with the idea of helping citizens in dictatorships to access material about democracy and human rights works just as well for anyone who is seeking pornographic material. Governments also face problems in policing social networks on the internet and opposition from anti-censorship organisations.

Source: Adapted from SETH FINKELSTEIN, 'The internet can't be censored and it's wrong for governments to try', *The Guardian*, 13 September 2007

Source D

Last week's decision in the case brought by J.K. Rowling has stacked yet another building block in the creation of a privacy law. The court upheld Rowling's right to battle to ban publication of pictures of her 18-month-old son. Such cases are not isolated and have a common thread – they involve celebrities and they raise the same questions. Should those living in the public eye be subject to judgement by the tabloids and have their private lives revealed for public scrutiny? Is this the price of fame? What information or gossip (true or not) should the public be entitled to know? Is press motivation purely about selling more newspapers rather than ensuring that the public is appropriately informed?

Weighing what is of interest to the public against what is in the public interest has been a task for English judges since the European Convention of Human Rights was made part of UK law. Traditionally the UK has no separate right of privacy but views are beginning to change. Newspapers have long argued that the private lives of celebrities should be subject to public scrutiny because they are role models, but that reasoning is beginning to falter. While the public has the right to know of the dishonesty or failings of elected officials and of those with power in finance or the economy, should we be entitled to participate in the blatant exploitation for our entertainment of Britney Spears or Amy Winehouse? There may be no UK privacy law as yet, but the end of kiss-and-tell may be close at hand.

Source: Adapted from GRAHAM SHEAR and ALISON GREEN, 'Is this the end of kiss and tell?'
Times Online, 13 May 2008

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