

English A: language and literature – Standard level – Paper 1
Anglais A : langue et littérature – Niveau moyen – Épreuve 1
Inglés A: lengua y literatura – Nivel medio – Prueba 1

Monday 4 May 2015 (morning)
Lundi 4 mai 2015 (matin)
Lunes 4 de mayo de 2015 (mañana)

1 hour 30 minutes / 1 heure 30 minutes / 1 hora 30 minutos

Instructions to candidates

- Do not open this examination paper until instructed to do so.
- Write an analysis on one text only.
- It is not compulsory for you to respond directly to the guiding questions provided. However, you may use them if you wish.
- The maximum mark for this examination paper is **[20 marks]**.

Instructions destinées aux candidats

- N'ouvrez pas cette épreuve avant d'y être autorisé(e).
- Rédigez une analyse d'un seul texte.
- Vous n'êtes pas obligé(e) de répondre directement aux questions d'orientation fournies. Vous pouvez toutefois les utiliser si vous le souhaitez.
- Le nombre maximum de points pour cette épreuve d'examen est de **[20 points]**.

Instrucciones para los alumnos

- No abra esta prueba hasta que se lo autoricen.
- Escriba un análisis de un solo texto.
- No es obligatorio responder directamente a las preguntas de orientación que se incluyen, pero puede utilizarlas si lo desea.
- La puntuación máxima para esta prueba de examen es **[20 puntos]**.

Write an analysis on **one** of the following texts. Include comments on the significance of context, audience, purpose and formal and stylistic features.

Text 1

In Britain, since 2004, it is no longer compulsory to study a foreign language after the age of 14.

TheObserver

Our failure to speak foreign languages should shame us. It's not civilised.

Schools and schoolchildren ditch languages like there's no tomorrow. Just as we've become adept at finding the shortest and the quickest and the most economical, so we can sniff out anything that's not a doss¹. "Grammar? Pronunciation? Different alphabet? Spelling? Accents? Umlauts? Ooh, no thanks – don't fancy that." Modern languages have become, in the awful semi-euphemism, "twilight subjects" – you study them on your own, after school's out.

Education is a field hospital, where the little troops are patched up and turned round and sent back to fight in the great economic war that seems to be all that's left of life. Respect, articulateness and awareness of others are all related and what greater disrespect can there be than not speaking to others in their languages? How much respect does that even allow? How can you hope to understand others while requiring them to speak to you in their English?

Think of the loss of possibility, the preordained narrowness of a life encased in one language, as if you were only ever allowed one, as if it were your skin in which you were born. Or your cage. That's your lot. When the great Australian poet Les Murray said: "We are a language species", he didn't mean English. We think and are and have our being in, and in and out of languages – and where's the joy and the richness, if you don't even have two to rub together? If you don't have another language, you are condemned to occupy the same positions, the same phrases, all your life. It's harder to outwit yourself, harder to doubt yourself, in just one language. It's harder to play.

Image removed for copyright reasons

There is this strange cluelessness of the English. The country is so rooted, so settled, one thinks it has survived everything others can throw at it, but it won't survive its own wildly irresponsible experiments on itself. English will become deformed and opaque if those using it haven't studied other languages.

The case for learning another language, or having another language, though, is not that you need it to use and understand your own. Nor is it the banal, utilitarian one that it's good to be able to order a beer or a room in another country. It's not the vulgar economic one that it's good to be able to schmooze² your foreign boss. It's that you are not making enough of your individual potential if you allow yourself to be enclosed by one language.

The so-called "world language", English, is spoken as a first language by just 7 % of the world's inhabitants; 75 % of people speak no English.

Languages are some of the oldest, deepest, uncanniest, most thoughtful human inventions. A disdain for, or lack of interest in, all the others does not seem to me to be a civilised, or even a tolerable state of affairs. Foreigners will go on learning English, regardless. The British have an obligation, it seems to me, to reciprocate.

Call it what you like – mutuality, courtesy, fair exchange, good practice. Not to do so is in every sense hateful. A self-exemption. A trusting in force and market, where – for once – force and market do not apply. A departure from international polity³. A terminal and blazingly wrong conceit.

Michael Hofmann, “To speak another language isn’t just cultured, it’s a blow against stupidity”, 15 August 2010, *Guardian*. Copyright Guardian News & Media Ltd 2015.

¹ a doss: an easy task

² to schmooze: to win over

³ polity: political organization

- Comment on the way the article and its illustration depict the British and their attitude to language.
- Comment on the arguments and techniques the writer uses to convince and entertain his audience.

Text 2

A soldier in the Highland Scots Territorial Regiment writes to his wife from the front during the second battle of Ypres.

Hell Fire Corner, June 2nd 1915

Dear Phyllis,

These are strenuous times indeed. It's well over a week since we came up here, and this is the first opportunity I have had of getting off a letter.

5 We had rather a thrilling march up, and made all the more thrilling by the probability of having to make an attack at the end of it.

10 Along the none too wide road four streams of traffic were passing, on the outside, to the right, jostling us and moving in the same direction, clattered long lines of ammunition limbers¹, British and Belgian, the latter reminiscent of country bakers' carts manned by semi-equipped emergency postmen. With them went convoys of motor ambulances. Coming the other way the same limbers and ambulances, but now the limbers were empty and the ambulances full. And on the far side of the road straggling little groups of weary men, some of them hardly able to breathe from the effects of the gas. Through it all buzzed the dispatch riders, twisting and turning among the horses with unbelievable skill. As we marched the men sang, sang as only Scotch troops can.

15 At last we reached the outskirts of Ypres. At the bridge where the sentry stands, guarding the ruined city from the hand of the looter, the pipers turned aside and broke into "Highland Laddie". From the men came what a journalist would probably describe as a "deep-throated roar", and for the life of me I can't give a better word for it. In it blended the voices of the business men, students, clerks, artisans, labourers and all the other classes which go to make up the battalion. As we entered Wipers² it died down, for who could be anything but silent in that city of the dead? Past the Cloth Hall, past the Cathedral, past shops and houses now little heaps of crumbling brick.

20 The men, of course, were dead fagged³ by the time they got there, but we had to set them to dig themselves in without a moment's rest. Poor devils. But at dawn we were so far down that the Hun⁴ had only our head and shoulders to pot at instead of our entire weary anatomies.

25 Since then we have spent the time being shelled by their artillery. Yesterday we had thirteen hours of it without a moment's respite. By night we try to rebuild the trenches which have been blown in by day. After the Germans have been shelling us for an hour or so our own artillery will reply with one round of shrapnel, generally a "dud". But of course that isn't their fault. If only the B.E.F. [British Expeditionary Force] could lay hands on the man whose fault it is, he would have a pretty rough crossing. Was out in No Man's Land⁵ last night firing rifle grenades. It was creepy work out there in the long, wet grass, in which you kept on running against dead bodies. To my dismay they all failed to explode, and it was not till we got back safely that I remembered that I had not pulled out the pins!

30 We hear (1) that our depleted battalion is shortly to return home to recruit, (2) that all T.F. [Territorial Force] battalions are to be withdrawn from the firing line, (3) that we are to do an attack, (4) that we are to form the nucleus of a new conscript battalion, (5) that we are going to Rouen to dig drains.

There's a fine selection for you. Take your choice and it's certain to be untrue. Meanwhile here are we, stretched across the road to Ypres and holding what is probably the most important part of the whole line.

40 With which cheery thought, farewell.

Your Tired THOMAS.

The papers of Captain N C S Down. *Imperial War Museum Documents* 62/NCSD and courtesy of the author's estate.

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- ¹ a limber: a two-wheeled vehicle for transporting ammunition
² Wipers: the soldiers' way of pronouncing Ypres
³ dead fagged: exhausted
⁴ the Hun: soldiers' slang for "the Germans"
⁵ No Man's Land: the area between the trenches of hostile armies

- In what ways does the use of detail add to our understanding of the letter-writer and the situation he finds himself in?
 - Comment on the tone of the letter-writer in relation to his situation and his audience.
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