

BACCALAURÉAT GÉNÉRAL

SESSION DE 2003

ANGLAIS

LANGUE VIVANTE 2

Série S

Durée de l'épreuve 2 heures – Coefficient : 2

L'usage de la calculatrice et du dictionnaire n'est pas autorisé

Ce sujet comporte 4 pages numérotées de 1 à 4.

Compréhension écrite	10 points
Expression	10 points

'Here's your paper.' Vinnie's seatmate holds out the London *Times*, clumsily refolded.

'Oh. Thank you.' To avoid further requests for it from other passengers, she places the newspaper in her lap beneath *Vogue*.

'Thank you. Not much in it.'

Since this is not phrased as a question, Vinnie is not obliged to respond, and does not. Not much of what? she wonders. Perhaps of American news, sports events, middlebrow comment, or even advertisements, in comparison to whatever paper he habitually reads. Or perhaps, being used to screaming headlines and exclamatory one-sentence paragraphs, he has been misled by the typographical and stylistic restraint of the *Times* into thinking that nothing of importance occurred in the world yesterday. And perhaps nothing has...

Setting aside *Vogue*, she unfolds the newspaper. Gradually, the leisurely *Times* style, with its air of measured consideration and its undertone of educated irony, begins to calm her, as the voice of an English nanny might quiet a hurt, overwrought child.

'You on your way to London?'

'What? Yes.' Caught as it were in the act, she admits her destination and returns her glance to the story Nanny is telling her about Prince Charles.

'Glad to get out of that New York weather, I bet.'

Again Vinnie agrees, but in such a way as to make it clear that she does not choose to converse. She shifts her body and the tissue sheets of the paper toward the window, though nothing can be seen there. The plane seems to stand still, shuddering with a monotonous regularity, while ragged gray billows of cloud churn past.

However long the flight, Vinnie always tries to avoid striking up acquaintance with anyone, especially on transatlantic journeys. According to her calculations, there is far more chance of having to listen to some bore for seven-and-a-half hours than of meeting someone interesting - and after all, whom even among her friends would she want to converse with for so long?

Besides, this man looks like someone Vinnie would hardly want to converse with for seven-and-a-half minutes. His dress and speech proclaim him to be, probably, a Southern Plains States businessman of no particular education or distinction; the sort of person who goes on package tours to Europe. And indeed the carry-on bag that rests between his oversize Western-style leather boots is pasted with the same SUN TOURS logo she had noticed earlier: fat comic-book letters enclosing a grinning Disney sun. Physically too he is of a type she has never cared for: big, ruddy, blunt-featured, with cropped coarse graying red hair. Some women would consider him attractive in a weather-beaten, Western way; but Vinnie has always preferred in men an elegant slimness, fair fine hair and skin, small well-cut features - the sort of looks that are an idealized male version of her own.

Half an hour later, as she refolds the *Times* and gets out a novel, she glances again at her companion. He is wedged heavily in his seat, neither dozing nor reading, although the airline magazine lies limp on his broad knees. For a moment she speculates as to what sort of man would embark on a transatlantic flight without reading materials, categorizing him as philistine and as improvident. It was foolish of him to count on passing the time in conversation: even if he didn't happen to be seated beside someone like Vinnie, he might well have been placed next to foreigners or children. What will he do now, just sit there?

As the plane drones on, Vinnie's question is answered. At intervals her seatmate gets up and walks toward the rear, returning each time smelling unpleasantly of burnt tobacco. Vinnie, who detests cigarettes, wonders irritably why he didn't request a seat in the smoking section. He rents headphones from the stewardess, fits the plastic pieces into his large red ears, and listens to the low-graded recorded noise - evidently without satisfaction, since he keeps switching channels. Finally he rises again and, standing in the aisle, converses with a member of his tour group in the seat ahead, and then for even longer with two others in the seats behind. Vinnie realizes that she is surrounded by Sun Tourists, the representatives of all she deplores and despises in her native land and is going to London to get away from.

Foreign Affairs
Alison Lurie (1984)

COMPREHENSION

1) Tick the right box

The scene takes place on board ...

- a bus
- a plane
- a train
- a boat

Give four elements from the text to justify your choice:

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)

2) Tick the right box

The passengers are travelling from ...

- New-York to London
- London to New-York

Justify your choice by ...

-
-

3) Say who the two main characters are

- a)
- b)

4) (a) Give four examples of different "reading materials" mentioned in the text.

Reading materials

(b) Which character reads what?

Female character	Male character

5) The male character says "Not much in it" (line 4).

(a) What does "it" refer to?

(b) Read lines 5 to 10. Tick one or more answers to show what he usually reads, according to the female character. Justify your answer(s) by quoting from the text :

- Literature.....
- International news.....
- National news
- News analysis.....
- Sensational news

6) Say whether these statements are true (T) or false (F). Circle the right letter. Justify your answer by quoting from the text and indicate the lines of the quotations.

According to the female character, the man appears to be:

T F - somebody she would enjoy speaking with

.....

T F - a typical American tourist

.....

T F - an elegant man

.....

T F - what an ideal man should be according to her

.....

T F - an impatient sort of person

.....

