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ENGLISH A1 – STANDARD LEVEL – PAPER 1
ANGLAIS A1 – NIVEAU MOYEN – ÉPREUVE 1
INGLÉS A1 – NIVEL MEDIO – PRUEBA 1

Wednesday 2 May 2012 (morning)
Mercredi 2 mai 2012 (matin)
Miércoles 2 de mayo de 2012 (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 a commentary on one passage 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 *[25 marks]*.

INSTRUCTIONS DESTINÉES AUX CANDIDATS

- N'ouvrez pas cette épreuve avant d'y être autorisé(e).
- Rédigez un commentaire sur un seul des passages. Le commentaire ne doit pas nécessairement répondre aux questions d'orientation fournies. Vous pouvez toutefois les utiliser si vous le désirez.
- Le nombre maximum de points pour cette épreuve d'examen est *[25 points]*.

INSTRUCCIONES PARA LOS ALUMNOS

- No abra esta prueba hasta que se lo autoricen.
- Escriba un comentario sobre un solo fragmento. No es obligatorio responder directamente a las preguntas que se ofrecen a modo de guía. Sin embargo, puede usarlas si lo desea.
- La puntuación máxima para esta prueba de examen es *[25 puntos]*.

Write a commentary on **one** of the following:

1.

Non-Paying Passengers

Walk down any busy street. Sit in a crowded restaurant. Take a seat in a well-filled cinema. In particular, board a packed train. The chances are that somewhere in the immediate vicinity is a ghost. An actual, visible, audible, and – heaven help us – a solid ghost.

This is an unpalatable truth, that would be greeted with derision were it widely broadcast. Certainly, Percy Fortesque would have become gravely embarrassed if such a possibility had been presented to him as an undeniable fact, his assumption being he was either in the presence of a crank or a madman.

He was therefore totally unprepared when he saw the face of his dead wife staring at him from a window of the five-forty-five train which was standing at Platform 16 at Waterloo Station. She was sitting in the corner seat, wearing that blank, long-suffering look he remembered so well, and her steel-rimmed glasses reflected the light from an overhead platform lamp, so that they resembled miniature suns.

Percy's heart gave one violent thump and the shock froze his reasoning powers into icy splinters of fear, so that he could only keep walking and finally seat himself in the compartment next to the driver's cab. Then his brain gradually resumed its natural function and thoughts came tripping over one another in a vain effort to present a rational theory.

"That woman could not possibly have been Doris." He repeated this comforting assertion over and over again, and was delighted to note a marked improvement in his morale. He then moved on to list a number of excellent reasons why a defunct wife could not possibly be travelling on the five-forty-five from Waterloo. "One, she's dead. I was with her when she died. She said: 'Oh, dear,' and died. Two, she was cremated and her ashes sprinkled under a rosebush." Percy was very pleased now that he had decided on cremation. The fire was so final. Old-fashioned burial meant the component parts were still around. The bones still in existence. The skull intact. And ... goodness gracious ... sealed up in a wooden box, she could still be in one piece. But the cremation oven disintegrated; it was as though she had never been. She did not exist.

Then his nasty, inquiring brain recalled the memory of that face framed in a train window and began to go over the salient points. She had been wearing that awful blue hat that Percy had so detested; and ... oh, good Lord ... there had been that little wen* on the left side of her chin. The comforting thought of a Doris double began to fade. Surely the arm of coincidence could not be that long? But what was the alternative? Percy shifted uneasily and a dour-faced woman to his left shot him a suspicious glance. A Doris-ghost on a rush-hour train? An apparition on the five-forty-five? Percy giggled and the dour-faced woman tried to edge away.

When he alighted at Richmond he had to have a second look. His heart once again began to beat unnaturally fast and anticipation made icy fingers to trail down his spine – but he had to seek reassurance. Surely a second look would prove beyond doubt that he had been mistaken. Been deceived by a trick of light. Deluded by a quirk of imagination.

He walked slowly along the platform, daring to look into each window, and disinterested faces stared back at him. Newspapers were rustled, one saucy-eyed girl winked at him, but so far there was no sign of the face. A whistle blew, a voice shouted: “Right, Charlie!” and the train
40 began to draw away. Percy stopped and faced the train as the carriages flashed by. Then, just as hope was maturing into blessed relief, he had a glimpse of Doris’s face. Blue hat, steel-rimmed glasses, wen and all. He had the impression that just as the carriage tore out of his line of view, she turned her head so as to get a last look at him.

45 It really was too much. He fainted on the platform and a porter revived him with a cup of tea from the station buffet.

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* wen: cyst or lump

- Consider the ways in which the first two paragraphs introduce the story.
- How are the characters of Percy and Doris conveyed through the use of detail?
- Comment on the balance in the passage between the supernatural and the everyday.
- Comment on the elements which contribute to the comic tone of the passage.

2.

Dinner Party 1940

“Do you mind the news while we eat?”
 So guests assenting
 The well-bred voice from Daventry¹
 Mingled with sounds from the pantry
 5 And slowly through the ether spilled
 Its syllables ... not silencing
 augmenting
 The show of wit which never fails
 Thanks to 7.30 cock-tails ... “and at Narvik²
 10 Where for five days a storm has raged
 a few were killed ... ”
 “More mutton, Alice?” “Yes, it’s delicious, dear,
 Yesterday at bridge I held three aces, three ... ”
 “in the Baltic
 15 it is reported from Stockholm that the
 soldiers fled
 leaving a number of dead” ...
 “But don’t you like it cold with guava-jelly?”

 The well-bred voice from Daventry
 20 Did not grow less well-bred
 And did not speak of more than three or four hundred dead,
 And did not really silence the sounds from the pantry
 Or the show of wit which never fails
 Thanks to 7.30 cock-tails.

 25 Cold mutton is delicious with guava-jelly
 And does not seriously incommode
 Like cold lead in the belly.

Philip Sherlock (1986) ‘Dinner Party 1940’, in: Paula Burnett (ed.)
The Penguin Book of Caribbean Verse in English, Penguin, Harmondsworth.

¹ Daventry: centre of BBC broadcasting at the time

² Narvik: scene of battle in Norway

- Comment on the setting and situation in the poem.
- Discuss the contrasting voices and sounds.
- Comment on the imagery and literary techniques such as rhyme, repetition and alliteration.
- Discuss the ways in which the final three lines contribute to the overall meaning of the poem.