

# ENTRY TEST - MAY 2021 -

## AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL SECTION

LYCEE ANDRE ARGOUGES  
GRENOBLE

**PART I: Reading comprehension (20 points)**

Answer the questions on a separate sheet.

(Excerpt from *The Remains of the Day* by Kazuo Ishiguro, published in 1989)

**PART II: Writing assignment (20 points)**

Choose **ONE** subject. Write about 250 words. Use a separate sheet.

**Parts I and II shall be done in one hour and thirty minutes**

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**PART III : Aural Comprehension . (20 points)**

(about 20 minutes ; use a separate sheet)

documentary on being a modern butler

## PART I: Reading comprehension (20 points)

**Short answers** are expected. Justify using elements from the text.

### The narrator

1) a- As a butler what are his duties in the scene under scrutiny ? (X2)  
Are they presented as being very important ? Justify in just a few words.

b- Mr Stevens is torn between two duties.

- Mention them.

- Find one line in the text that encapsulates (shows) this tension in the scene.

Dramatic TENSION is created thanks to **CONTRAST** in this scene.

2) Contrast **the atmosphere** among the guests and the one among the domestic servants. (Define the two moods; justify using words from the text.)

3) What are the elements of the text pointing to Mr Stevens's desire to **preserve appearances** and to **keep a stiff upper lip**.

5) There is a contrast in **social statuses**.

- How do the other servants address the main character? (X2)

- How does Lord Darlington address him? What do these differences reveal?

- Why do the cook, the housekeeper and the butler have a name but not the first footman nor the footmen?

### DRAMA :

The contrast between **one's inner life and one's persona** (façade) is reflected in the way the scene is written. Many elements are borrowed from the theatre (such as the exclusive use of direct speech).

6) What space is treated as 'the stage'? and what space as 'backstage'?

How is the contrast pointed out in the way the scene is written? (= how is this shown through 'stage business' (the moves of characters) as well as the vocabulary used?)

7) There is a **paradox** in the way the text is written.

a- What kind of narrator tells the story ? However, do we have access to his thoughts?

b- Do we get to see the scene from another character's perspective? Yet, how do we learn about Mr Stevens's real feelings?

*The scene takes place in Lord Darlington's mansion. The narrator is the head butler, Miss Kenton is the housekeeper.*

This was met by the loudest burst of approval yet, followed by warm and sustained applause. I could see Mr Lewis smiling at his wine glass and shaking his head wearily. It was just around this stage I became aware of the first footman beside me, who whispered: "Miss Kenton would like a word with you, sir. She's just outside the door." I made my exit as discreetly as possible just as his lordship, still on his feet, was embarking on a further point.

Miss Kenton looked rather upset. "Your father has become very ill, Mr. Stevens," she said. "I've called for Dr. Meredith, but I understand he may be a little delayed."

I must have looked a little confused, for Miss Kenton then said: "Mr Stevens he really is in a poor state. You had better come and see him."

"I only have a moment. The gentlemen are liable to retire to the smoking room at any moment."

"Of course. But you must come now, Mr. Stevens, or else you may deeply regret it later." Miss Kenton was already leading the way, and we hurried through the house up to my father's small attic room. Mrs. Mortimer, the cook, was standing over my father's bed, still in her apron.

"Oh, Mr. Stevens," she said upon our entry, "he's gone very poorly."

Indeed, my father's face had gone a dullish red colour, like no colour I had seen on a living being. I heard Miss Kenton say softly beside me: "His pulse is very weak." I gazed at my father for a moment, touched his forehead slightly, then withdrew my hand.

"In my opinion," Mrs. Mortimer said, "he's suffered a stroke." With that she began to cry. I noticed she reeked powerfully of fat and roast cooking. I turned away and said to Miss Kenton:

"This is most distressing. Nevertheless, I must now return downstairs."

"Of course, Mr. Stevens. I will tell you when the doctor arrives. Or else when there are any changes."

"Thank you, Miss Kenton."

I hurried down the stairs and was in time to see the gentlemen proceeding into the smoking room. The footmen looked relieved to see me, and I immediately signaled them to get to their positions.

Whatever had taken place in the banqueting hall after my departure, there was now a genuinely celebratory atmosphere among the guests. All around the smoking room, gentlemen seemed to be standing in clusters laughing and clapping each other on the shoulder. [...]

I proceeded to serve some port to some other of the guests. [...] I felt something touch my elbow and turned to find Lord Darlington.

"Stevens, are you all right?"

"Yes, sir. Perfectly."

"You look as though you're crying."

I laughed and taking out a handkerchief, quickly wiped my face. "I'm very sorry, sir. The strains of a hard day."

"Yes, it's been hard work."

Someone addressed his lordship and he turned away to reply. [...]

Miss Kenton was still standing out in the hall where I had first spotted her. As I emerged she walked silently towards the staircase, a curious lack of urgency in her manner. Then she turned and said: "Mr Stevens, I'm very sorry. Your father passed away about four minutes ago."

(Kazuo Ishiguro, *The Remains of the Day*, 1989)

In order to reflect the British manners and decorum of the time the text is interspersed with **EUPHEMISMS**.

Clarify the following passages in just a few words:

**9) understatements :**

-‘Looked rather upset’

-‘he may be a little delayed.’

-‘my father’s face had gone a dull reddish colour, like no colour I had ever seen on a living being.’

-‘or else when there are any changes’

-‘the strains of a hard day.’

-‘ a curious lack of urgency in her manners.’

- ‘Your father passed away’

**PART II: Writing assignment (20 points)**

Choose **ONE** subject. Write about 250 words. Use a separate sheet.

- 1) Mention something you did not do when you should have (or something you did when you should not have). In behaving that way you did not comply with your duty. Explain how ‘deeply you regretted it later.’

**OR**

- 2) Tell an episode of your life when you were torn between personal preferences and duty (family, school, moral or otherwise)

**OR**

- 3) Write a dramatic scene (= a scene for the theatre) in which a character is forced to do something he or she does not want to. The scene can be tragic or humorous.

**Parts I and II shall be done in one hour and thirty minutes**

# ENTRY TEST

## - MAY 2021 -

# AMERICAN

## INTERNATIONAL SECTION

### LYCEE ANDRE ARGOUGES

### GRENOBLE

#### **PART III : Aural Comprehension . (20 points)** (about 20 minutes ; use a separate sheet)

You are going to listen to a 2 minute and 10 second-long document.  
You will report in French OR in English what you understood in a coherent way.

#### Procedure.

You will listen to the whole document **three times** :  
a first time followed by a one-minute pause to let you take notes ;  
then a second time also followed by a one-minute pause ;  
and finally a third time followed by a ten-minute pause during which you must write your report.

#### Format.

- You must present the document (type, how many people speak, in which setting, with what purpose ...).
- Then you must report what you understood using paragraphs (one part in the document corresponding to one paragraph of your report).
- Finally you can comment on the tone or the attitude of the speaker(s).

#### **TITLE OF THE AUDIO DOCUMENT :**

documentary on being a modern butler & butlering:

'Downton Abbey effect, British butlers in demand,' on CBS

## AURAL COMPREHENSION

2 videos we might use.

1) Downton abbey effect, British butlers in demand, on CBS 5 min

<https://youtu.be/YXlpBUrBgTU>

I prefer this one but we obviously need to select a portion.

2) Butlery at Buckingham palace 2'10''

<https://youtu.be/nXBsQ1GB64>