

**ENGLISH A2 – HIGHER LEVEL – PAPER 1**  
**ANGLAIS A2 – NIVEAU SUPÉRIEUR – ÉPREUVE 1**  
**INGLÉS A2 – NIVEL SUPERIOR – PRUEBA 1**

Tuesday 4 May 2004 (morning)

Mardi 4 mai 2004 (matin)

Martes 4 de mayo de 2004 (mañana)

2 hours / 2 heures / 2 horas

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**INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES**

- Do not open this examination paper until instructed to do so.
- Section A consists of two passages for comparative commentary.
- Section B consists of two passages for comparative commentary.
- Choose either Section A or Section B. Write one comparative commentary.

**INSTRUCTIONS DESTINÉES AUX CANDIDATS**

- N'ouvrez pas cette épreuve avant d'y être autorisé(e).
- La section A comporte deux passages à commenter.
- La section B comporte deux passages à commenter.
- Choisissez soit la section A, soit la section B. Écrivez un commentaire comparatif.

**INSTRUCCIONES PARA LOS ALUMNOS**

- No abra esta prueba hasta que se lo autoricen.
- En la Sección A hay dos fragmentos para comentar.
- En la Sección B hay dos fragmentos para comentar.
- Elija la Sección A o la Sección B. Escriba un comentario comparativo.

Choose either Section A or Section B.

## SECTION A

Analyse and compare the following two texts.

Discuss the similarities and differences between the texts and their theme(s). Include comments on the ways the authors use elements such as structure, tone, images and other stylistic devices to communicate their purposes.

Text 1 (a)

### Pairing off: choose the right shoes

**slim skirt** Wearing a pencil skirt? A sleek pump with a pointed toe and a princess (or “kitten”) heel is the way to go. Flattering to any leg, this matchup is flirty but never overt. It’s easy to wear and versatile enough to take you through a workday and into the evening.

5 **narrow pants** One of the season’s sharpest silhouettes is skinny pants with a sexy high heel. Delicate stilettos\* magically extend the lines of the narrow pants, making legs look even longer. Go for a pointed toe, which will further extend the leggy profile.

10 **wide pants** Flowing, wide-leg pants require shoes with a medium to high heel; a flat shoe would make wide pants appear dumpy. And spike heels can look spindly or off-kilter with these pants. For the most modern look, choose a wide, stacked heel with a (Chanel-inspired) round toe.

**full skirt** With a swiny, midcalf skirt, you’ll want to go for a very low heel; a ballet flat is a perfect choice. Steer clear of stilettos (they’ll be overpowered by the skirt’s volume), and skip chunky heels, which will make your outfit seem matronly, even stumpy.

15 **cropped pants** They’re always a challenge: Flat boots and casual shoes don’t suit them. Instead choose elegant, high-heeled boots that complement the pants’ tailored lines; a pair in glossy brown leather defines the leg, adding a bit of curviness and height.

**micromini** Heels and minis? So passé. To look up-to-the-minute, balance a small skirt with sturdy suede boots that slouch a little. Look for a modern pair – unembellished, with flat heels – to break up the expanse of leg below the mini’s hemline.

Adapted from the fashion magazine *In Style* (Fall 2002)

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\* stilettos: shoes with very high, thin heels

**Text 1 (b)**

The crucial encounter with fashion occurred when I was 12. The family fortunes had taken such a severe downturn that Social Services had issued my mother with a voucher to buy me a pair of shoes to wear at my new secondary school. The only place that accepted them was a gloomy little cobbler’s shop hidden away under an old railway arch. The old man who owned the place, unshaven, bent, gruff and wheezing, inspected the voucher, measured my feet, and without a word shuffled to the back of the shop. He returned with a single shoe box.

‘See if these fit,’ he said to my mother.

Taking off the lid, he brought out a pair of the grimmest black lace-up school shoes I had ever seen in my life. In today’s fashion-diverse world it is hard to imagine the despair I felt at the sight of what he expected me to put on my feet. And then greater despair as it occurred to me that I would be expected actually to wear them out in the world. They were so blankly, stylelessly sensible. Great clumping virtuous blocks of stiff leather with bulbous reinforced toecaps, designed never to wear out. I had only to take one look at them, to see myself arriving at my new school with those on my feet, to know and feel, gut and spine, head and heart, the shame of becoming an instant pariah<sup>1</sup> in the cruel girls’ world. The shoes would stand for my entire character, my class, my race. But it wasn’t just the social disaster of such unfashionability that froze my heart: it was the fear that appearing to be the kind of person who wore such shoes might mean that that was the person I actually was. It wasn’t just that my peers would despise me: I would despise myself. I didn’t even dare risk seeing my reflection in the mirror in the empty shop.

I said, politely, that I didn’t like them. He was not impressed, he wasn’t interested in an opinion. These, it was made clear, were the shoes you got in return for vouchers. Take them or leave them, he told my mother, not so much as glancing at me. Though I sensed that the world was about to end, I shook my head firmly. I refused even to try them on. I would simply not have them on my feet. His lip curled at my bad character. I ought to be grateful that taxpayers were providing me with any shoes at all, the shopkeeper rasped. It was these, or it was nothing.

‘Then it’s nothing,’ I said, quite prepared for whatever punishment befell ungrateful children who didn’t know their place. I would wear my present shoes down to a sliver. If necessary I would go to school barefoot. My mother shouted at me all the way home. I slunk along beside her in silence. How could I do this to her, she screamed. What did a pair of shoes matter? In fact, they mattered like life itself. More, perhaps. Now, I am somewhat ashamed of having been obdurate<sup>2</sup> when times were bad, but the truth is that even as I write I flush at the imagined ignominy<sup>3</sup> of wearing those shoes. It was, as it were, my first fashion statement.

Jenny Diski, adapted from a column in *London Review of Books* (14 November 2002)

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<sup>1</sup> pariah: outcast

<sup>2</sup> obdurate: stubborn

<sup>3</sup> ignominy: shame

## SECTION B

*Analyse and compare the following two texts.*

*Discuss the similarities and differences between the texts and their theme(s). Include comments on the ways the authors use elements such as structure, tone, images and other stylistic devices to communicate their purposes.*

### Text 2 (a)

In no time at all we were back on the main highway and that night I saw the entire state of Nebraska unroll before my eyes. A hundred and ten miles an hour<sup>1</sup> straight through, an arrow road, sleeping towns, no traffic, and the Union Pacific streamliner<sup>2</sup> falling behind us in the moonlight. I wasn't frightened at all that night; it was perfectly  
5 legitimate to go 110 and talk and have all the Nebraska towns – Ogallala, Gothenburg, Kearney, Grand Island, Columbus - unreel with dreamlike rapidity as we roared ahead and talked. It was a magnificent car; it could hold the road like a boat holds on water. Gradual curves were its singing ease. "Ah, man, what a dreamboat," sighed Dean. "Think if you and I had a car like this what we could do. Do you know there's a road that goes down  
10 Mexico and all the way to Panama? – and maybe all the way to the bottom of South America where the people are seven feet tall? Yes! You and I, Sal, we'd dig the whole world with a car like this because, man, the road must eventually lead to the whole world. Ain't nowhere else it can go – right?"

Jack Kerouac, adapted from the novel *On the Road* (1955)

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<sup>1</sup> A hundred and ten miles an hour: 177 kilometres per hour

<sup>2</sup> Union Pacific streamliner: a train

**Text 2 (b)**

The road was narrow, white, old, hard and scarred with shadow. It ran away westwards in the mist of the early morning, running cunningly through the little hills and going to some trouble to visit tiny towns which were not, strictly speaking, on its way. It was possibly one of the oldest roads in the world. I found it hard to think of a time when  
5 there was no road there because the trees and the tall hills and the fine views of bogland had been arranged by wise hands for the pleasing picture they made when looked at from the road. Without a road to have them looked at from they would have a somewhat aimless if not a futile<sup>1</sup> aspect.

Roads are the most ancient of human monuments, surpassing by many tens of  
10 centuries the oldest thing of stone that man has reared to mark his passing. A good road will have character and a certain air of destiny, an indefinable intimation<sup>2</sup> that it is going somewhere, be it east or west, and not coming back from there. If you go with such a road it will give you pleasant travelling, fine sights at every corner and a gentle ease of peregrination<sup>3</sup> that will persuade you that you are walking forever on falling ground. But  
15 if you go east on a road that is on its way west, you will marvel at the unfailing bleakness<sup>4</sup> of every prospect<sup>5</sup> and the great number of sore-footed inclines<sup>6</sup> that confront you to make you tired. If a friendly road should lead you into a complicated city with nets of crooked streets and five hundred other roads leaving it for unknown destinations, your own road will always be discernible<sup>7</sup> for its own self and will lead you safely out of the tangled  
20 town.

I walked quietly for a good distance on this road, thinking my own thoughts with the front part of my brain and at the same time taking pleasure with the back part in the great and widespread finery of the morning. The air was keen, clear, abundant and intoxicating. Its powerful presence could be discerned everywhere, shaking up the green things jauntily,  
25 conferring greater dignity and definition on the stones and boulders, forever arranging and re-arranging the clouds and breathing life into the world. The sun had climbed steeply out of his hiding and was now standing benignly in the lower sky pouring down floods of enchanting light and preliminary tinglings of heat.

I continued my walk along the road. It was pleasant easeful walking. I felt sure I was  
30 not going against the road. It was, so to speak, accompanying me.

Flann O'Brien, adapted from the novel *The Third Policeman* (1967)

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1 futile: useless

2 intimation: hint

3 peregrination: walking

4 bleakness: a quality of emptiness, dullness, dreariness

5 prospect: view

6 inclines: hills

7 discernible: recognizable

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