



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

Monday 5 May 2008 (morning)
Lundi 5 mai 2008 (matin)
Lunes 5 de mayo de 2008 (mañana)

2 hours / 2 heures / 2 horas

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)

I opened the refrigerator, peered into the freezer compartment. A strange crackling sound came off the plastic food wrap, the snug covering for half eaten things, the Ziploc¹ sacks of livers and ribs, all gleaming with sleety² crystals. A cold dry sizzle. A sound like some element breaking down.

5 No one was around. I walked across the kitchen, opened the compactor³ drawer and looked inside the trash bag. A cube of mangled cans, clothes hangers, animal bones and other refuse. The bottles were broken, the cartons flat. Product colours were undiminished in brightness and intensity. Fats and juices seeped through the layers of pressed vegetable matter. I felt like an archaeologist about to sift through a finding of tool fragments and assorted cave trash.

10 I unfolded the bag cuffs, released the latch and lifted out the bag. The full stench hit me with shocking force. Was this ours? Did it belong to us? Had we created it? I took the bag out to the garage and emptied it. The compressed bulk sat there like an ironic modern sculpture, massive, squat, mocking. I jabbed at it with the end of a rake and then spread the material over the concrete floor. I picked through it item by item, mass by shapeless mass, wondering why I felt guilty, a violator of privacy, uncovering intimate secrets. Is garbage so private? Does it
15 glow at the core with personal heat and clues to humiliating flaws? I found crayon drawings of a naked female figure. There was a long piece of twine that contained a series of knots and loops. It seemed at first a random construction. Looking more closely I thought I detected a complex relationship between the size of the loops, the kind of knots and the intervals between knots with loops and freestanding knots. Some kind of occult⁴ geometry. I came across soap, ear swabs and
20 fragments of ballpoint pen refills.

Don DeLillo, from the novel *White Noise* (1984)

¹ Ziploc: a brand of re-sealable plastic bags

² sleety: frozen

³ compactor: a household machine for crushing garbage

⁴ occult: involving the supernatural or mystical

Text 1 (b)

My Daily Dives in the Dumpster

Perhaps everyone who has a kitchen and a regular supply of groceries has, at one time or another, eaten half a sandwich before discovering mould on the bread, or has gotten a mouthful of milk before realizing the milk had turned. Nothing of the sort is likely to happen to a Dumpster diver¹ because he is constantly reminded that most food is discarded for a reason.

5 Yet perfectly good food can be found in Dumpsters. Canned goods, for example, turn up fairly often in the Dumpsters I frequent. All except the most phobic people would be willing to eat from a can even if it came from a Dumpster. I have few qualms² about dry foods such as crackers, cookies, cereal, chips, and pasta if they are free of visible contaminants and still dry and crisp. Raw fruits and vegetables with intact skins seem perfectly safe to me, excluding, of course,
10 the obviously rotten. Many are discarded for minor imperfections that can be pared away.

I avoid ethnic foods I am unfamiliar with. If I do not know what it is supposed to look or smell like when it is good, I cannot be certain I will be able to tell if it is bad. No matter how careful I am I still get dysentery at least once a month, and more often in warm weather. I do not want to paint too romantic a picture. Dumpster diving has serious drawbacks as a way of life.

15 Though Dumpsters seem somehow less personal than garbage cans, they still contain bank statements, bills, correspondence, pill bottles, and other sensitive information. I avoid trying to draw conclusions about the people who dump in the Dumpsters I frequent. I think it would be unethical to do so, although I know many people will find the idea of scavenger³ ethics too funny for words.

20 Occasionally a find tells a story. I once found a small paper bag containing a partially used container of birth control pills and the torn pieces of a picture of a young man. Clearly, the woman was through with him.

25 Dumpster things are often sad – abandoned teddy bears, shredded wedding albums, despaired-of sales kits. I find diaries, journals, and essays discarded by college students; I am horrified to discover the kind of essay that now merits an A in an undergraduate course.

Lars Eighner, from the essay collection *Travels with Lizbeth: Three Years on the Road and on the Streets* (1993)

¹ Dumpster diver: one who rummages through commercial garbage cans (called Dumpsters) in order to retrieve items discarded by others

² qualms: misgivings or fears

³ scavenger: someone who collects things that have been discarded by others

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)

The twin-island nation of Antigua & Barbuda, the largest and most developed tourist destination in the Leeward Islands chain, has much to offer visitors.

Home to most of the nation’s better-known hotels, Antigua is the larger of the two islands at about 108 square miles. From its upscale resorts for the very rich to comfy hideaways favored by sailors,
5 Antigua’s hotel choices are varied, although they lack the presence of a US-based chain.

Islanders claim their home boasts 365 beaches, and while the count is questionable, the beaches are beautiful. Topography is varied as well, with rugged mountain peaks ideal for island overviews, undulating fields of grass once used to grow sugar cane, winding roads lined by pineapple fields, with desert-like conditions rounding out the scenery.

10 The long reach of the British Empire is still evident in both the formal demeanor of the local population and in the fascinating, must-see historical site called Nelson’s Dockyard. Another place that’s popular with visitors is Shirley Heights. Once used by the British Navy as a lookout post, the site offers panoramic views, and is the home of a twice-weekly party and barbecue for sunset-watchers. Although it’s mobbed with tourists and the food is overpriced,
15 the atmosphere is pure fun and local bands play infectious dance music.

Barbuda, the smaller sister island, is wild and barely inhabited. Most visitors arrive by propeller plane from Antigua at tiny Codrington Airstrip, which consists of one tiny cement block structure – the alleged terminal building – and a short runway. About 1000 inhabitants reside in Codrington, and beyond town are beautiful stretches of uninhabited beach accessed by rutted roads surrounded
20 by scrub brush and cacti.

Among but a handful of hotels, the island’s best-known resort is the tony¹ K-Club, a very private redoubt² that serves the rich and famous. Most visitors, though, are day-trippers, who can arrange a one-day tour with lunch while staying on Antigua.

“Antigua and Barbuda”, Reprinted by kind permission of www.wheretostay.com

¹ tony: stylish, fashionable

² redoubt: a secure place of refuge or defence

Text 2 (b)

As your plane descends to land, you might say, “What a beautiful island Antigua is” – more beautiful than any of the other islands you have seen, and they were very beautiful, in their way, but they were much too green, much too lush with vegetation, which indicated to you, the tourist, that they got quite a bit of rainfall, and rain is the very thing that you, just now, do not want, for you are thinking of the hard and cold and dark and long days you spent working in North America or Europe, earning some money so that you could stay in this place where the sun always shines and where the climate is deliciously hot and dry for the four to ten days you are going to be staying there; and since you are on your holiday, since you are a tourist, the thought of what it might be like for someone who had to live day in, day out in a place that suffers constantly from drought, and so has to watch carefully every drop of fresh water used (while at the same time surrounded by a sea and an ocean – the Caribbean Sea on one side, the Atlantic Ocean on the other), must never cross your mind.

You disembark from your plane. You go through customs. Since you are a tourist, a North American or European, and not an Antiguan black returning to Antigua from Europe or North America with cardboard boxes of much needed cheap clothes and food for relatives, you move through customs swiftly. Your bags are not searched. You emerge from customs into the hot, clean air: immediately you feel cleansed, immediately you feel blessed; you feel free. You see a man, a taxi driver, you ask him to take you to your destination; he quotes you a price. You immediately think that the price is in the local currency, for you are a tourist and you are familiar with these things (rates of exchange) and you feel even more free, for things seem so cheap, but then your driver ends by saying, “In US currency.” You may say, “Hmmm, do you have a formal sheet that lists official prices and destinations?” Your driver obeys the law and shows you the sheet, and he apologises for the incredible mistake he has made in quoting you a price off the top of his head which is so vastly different (favouring him) from the one listed. You are driven to your hotel by this taxi driver. The road on which you are travelling is a very bad road, very much in need of repair. You are feeling wonderful, so you say, “Oh, what a marvellous change these bad roads are from the highways I am used to in North America” (or Europe).

Jamaica Kincaid, from the essay, *A Small Place* (1988)