

Examen de session 1 (semestre 1, 2021-2022)

Samedi 8 janvier 2022

Durée : 1h30

Mode distanciel

*Indiquez très lisiblement dans votre copie
le numéro de chaque partie de l'examen à laquelle vous répondez.*

TEXT 1 :

'Some graduates have never read a book', warns London professor

Anna Davis, Education Correspondent, London Evening Standard, May 27 2014

Students are graduating from university without ever reading a book from cover to cover, a London professor warned.

Instead of reading whole books, undergraduates are using the index to find relevant points, reading articles and looking information up on Wikipedia, according to Orlando Figes, professor of history at Birkbeck, University of London.

He warned that children are encouraged to read this way at school to pass exams, and carry on doing it as they get older.

He said: "At university, too, they are trained in the academic discipline of "using" books (riffing through the index, reading introductions and conclusions, skim reading, or approaching them via book reviews) to construct an argument or engage with a scholarly controversy."

But he said students who do not read whole books miss out on true understanding and knowledge. Writing in the *Times Educational Supplement* he said: "Good books swallowed whole transform our lives. We lose ourselves in them, emerging from them changed, richer intellectually, with new questions and ideas about the world. To read such a book in its entirety is to comprehend how its argument is constructed, to appreciate it as a work of literature and to be immersed in reading. This must surely help students to lengthen their attention span, deal with texts that are difficult and assimilate knowledge."

Professor Figes has launched a new course called *Reading History*, on which students will be expected to read five short history books, examine the influence they have had, and show in their exam that they have read them thoroughly.

He warned that if students rely on the internet they could easily get their facts wrong. He said he checked Wikipedia for information about the Russian Revolution- his area of expertise- and found "an alarming number of mistakes, misapprehensions and misleading statements that would never have appeared in a textbook written by an expert in the field."

He said that experts need to help to improve the quality of information available online, which is why he has launched a free website to help students studying the Russian Revolution and Soviet history. He said: "What I hope, of course, is that it will steer students towards in-depth reading of books, not replace them."

PART A – TEXT COMPREHENSION

1- Choose the ONE correct answer based on the information found in the text. (2,5 points)

- a. This article is mostly about :
- college students
 - literature graduates
 - colleges
 - students from Birkbeck college
- b. The phenomenon can explained by :
- bad habits acquired when preparing for tests in secondary school
 - excessively priced books
 - the decreasing number of published books
 - the cost of accessing resources online
- c. According to Pr. Figes, there is :
- no point in reading a book from cover to cover
 - nothing to be done to address the issue
 - no way to guarantee the validity of information found online
 - no problem with skim reading
- d. To read a book from cover to cover means to :
- increase one's chances of losing it
 - increase one's chances to assimilate information
 - make it easier to plagiarize it
 - waste one's time and money
- e. The new course taught by Figes :
- requires reading five books thoroughly
 - offers the opportunity to both read and write stories
 - is about the Russian revolution
 - doesn't require taking an exam

B – VOCABULARY, SYNTAX, GRAMMAR

B1- Contraire ou synonyme ? Dites si les paires suivantes, extraites du texte, rassemblent des mots ou expressions de sens similaires (Syn) ou opposés (Opp). (2,5 points)

- a. « reading whole books » + « reading in its entirety » : Opp / Syn
- b. « reading from cover to cover » + « skim reading »: Opp / Syn
- c. « riffling through » + « in-depth reading » : Opp / Syn
- d. « looking up » + « checking » : Opp / Syn
- e. « scholarly » + « academic » : Opp / Syn

B2. – Réécrivez chacun des extraits entre guillemets en utilisant obligatoirement le début ou la fin de phrase proposé. (6 points)

Example (not in text) : “They are not allowed to go out and mix with people until they test negative.”

→ Not until... *they test negative are they allowed to go out and mix with people.*

a. « Instead of reading whole books, undergraduates are using the index. »

→ Undergraduates are using the index rather...

b. « Professor Figs has launched a new course called Reading History. »

→ The new course that ...

c. « He warned that if students rely on the internet they could easily get their facts wrong. »

→ ... who rely on the internet could easily get their facts wrong, he warned.

d. « experts need to help improve the quality of information available online. »

→ What experts need...

e. « he has launched a free website to help students studying the Russian Revolution. »

→ The reason why...

f. « Such an alarming number of mistakes would never have appeared in a textbook written by an expert. »

→ Never would such an alarming number of mistakes...

B3. Choisissez dans la liste ci-dessous les combinaisons de mots permettant de traduire correctement chacune des phrases proposées dans la colonne de gauche. Inutile de traduire la phrase entière, indiquez simplement dans la colonne de droite les termes employés, dans l'ordre correct, en incluant la négation s'il y a lieu. (4 pts)

Exemple : il y a beaucoup plus d'options = there are many + more options

EXEMPLE : il y a beaucoup plus d'options	many + more
a. Votre lecture est beaucoup trop rapide.	
b. Il n'y a pas autant de fautes que sur Wikipedia.	
c. Il y a deux fois moins de fautes que sur Wikipedia	
d. Tu as très peu de temps pour vérifier l'information.	
e. Nous avons un peu de temps pour lire.	
f. Cette source n'est pas aussi fiable que l'autre.	
g. Je ne lis pas autant que toi.	
h. Je lis beaucoup moins maintenant.	

much – as – few – a – little – many – twice – less – too – not – very

NB : tous les termes ci-dessus doivent être utilisés une fois et peuvent être réemployés autant de fois que nécessaire.

TEXT 2 :

The lost art of reading

Adapted and edited for clarity from David L. Ulin, The Los Angeles Times , Aug. 9, 2009.

Since I discovered reading, I've always been surrounded by stacks of books, yet sometime late last year-- I don't remember when, exactly-- I noticed *I was having trouble sitting down to read*.

What happened? It isn't a failure of desire so much as one of will. Or not will, exactly, but focus: the ability to still my mind long enough to inhabit someone else's world, and to let that someone else inhabit mine. Reading is an act of contemplation, perhaps the only act in which we allow ourselves to merge with the consciousness of another human being.

We possess the books we read, animating the waiting stillness of their language, but they possess us also, filling us with thoughts and observations, asking us to make them part of ourselves. In order for this to work, however, we need a certain type of silence, an ability to filter out the noise.

Such a state is increasingly elusive in our over-networked culture, in which every rumor and mundanity is blogged and tweeted. Today, it seems it is not contemplation we seek but an odd sort of distraction masquerading as being in the know.

Why? Because of the illusion that illumination is based on speed, that it is more important to react than to think, that we live in a culture in which something is attached to every bit of time.

Books insist that we immerse, that we slow down. We need books to pull us back from the onslaught, to distance ourselves from the present as a way of reconnecting with a more elemental sense of who we are.

What I'm struggling with is the encroachment of the buzz, the sense that there is something out there that merits my attention, when in fact it's mostly just *a series of disconnected riffs and fragments that add up to the anxiety of the age*.

Yet there is time, if we want it. We live in time; we understand ourselves in relation to it, but in our culture, time collapses into an ever-present now.

How do we pause when we must know everything instantly? How do we ruminate when we are constantly expected to respond? How do we immerse in something (an idea, an emotion, a decision) when we are no longer willing to give ourselves the space to reflect?

Reading has become an act of meditation, with *all of meditation's attendant difficulty and grace*.

And so I sit down. I try to make a place for silence. It's harder than it used to be, but still, I read.

PART C- QUESTIONS ON TEXT 2

TOTAL 6 points

C1. Which of the following propositions best summarises the essential message of the text (one correct answer, 1 pt):

- a. books provide shelter from a storm of non-essential information
- b. reading makes you ruminate
- c. reading books help us reconnect to our true selves and disconnect from superfluities
- d. books need us as much as we need them

C2. If you look up the acronym 'FOMO' in a (recent) dictionary, you'll find it explained as : "fear of missing out".

What passage from the text describes that exact same feeling ? Is it (one correct answer, 1 pt) :

- a. "we need a certain type of silence"
- b. "the sense that there is something out there that merits my attention"
- c. "in our culture, time collapses into an ever-present now"
- d. "to merge with the consciousness of another human being"

C3. **Reformulate** the following excerpts [in *italics* in the text] in order to **clarify** their meaning, using **your own words** (4 pts).

Example :

“I was having trouble sitting down to read” → it was hard for me to find time for, and focus on, my reading

- a. “a series of disconnected riffs and fragments that add up to the anxiety of the age”
- b. “with all of meditation’s attendant difficulty and grace”

PART D - QUESTIONS ON BOTH TEXTS

TOTAL 9 points

D1. What is the difference in focus and object between the two texts? Do they deal with the same thing, really ?

Utilisez des formes comme ‘whereas’, ‘unlike’ ou encore ‘as opposed to’ pour souligner le ou les contraste.s identifié.s.
Répondez en deux lignes standard environ. (2 pts)

D2. What is the message common to both texts ? Utilisez des expressions telles que “like”, “likewise”, “similarly”, “both” pour identifier les points de convergence. Développez votre réponse en deux lignes standard environ. (2 pts)

Choose question D3 OR D4. Write from 10 to 12 standard lines. (5 pts)

D3. Books or the Internet? Books and the Internet? Books on the Internet ? What do you want ?

OR

D4. Write about a book that has been a companion to you. Mention the storyline or contents and the reason it has been significant.

NB : par ‘ligne standard’ on entend une ligne typographiée en police Times New Roman ou équivalent, de taille 12 points; soit environ 16 à 18 mots par ligne.