

**BACCALAURÉAT GÉNÉRAL**

**SESSION 2009**

**ANGLAIS – LVI**

**Séries ES-S**

**Durée : 3 heures - Coefficient 3**

**L'usage des calculatrices et de tout dictionnaire est interdit.**

*Barème appliqué pour la correction*

<i>Compréhension écrite</i>	<i>10 points</i>
<i>Expression</i>	<i>10 points</i>

**Ce sujet comporte 4 pages.**

Nancy had arrived in England six months ago, and had invited Victoria to a coffee morning with Philly Bingham, a fellow mother at the school where Nancy had recently enrolled her son, Connor. All three women had sons in the same class. Alex and Philly's son, Rufus, were old friends, but Connor was becoming popular with his classmates on account of the hundreds of electronic toys and state-of-the-art computer games that filled his enormous bedroom. Also, he had a home cinema in the basement with all the latest films. And Nancy Masters served fabulous teas with real chips and American burgers followed by tubs of expensive ice-cream.

Philly Bingham was attempting to stare discreetly around the room, taking in the sound system, the television and the acres of mahogany furniture. Philly, thought Victoria, would probably describe herself as an old-fashioned Englishwoman from an old-established English family. Philly's own drawing room consisted of good but shabby furniture, a few faded rugs and a Labrador. On no account would Philly allow into her house a television the size of the one Nancy possessed. But, then, Philly couldn't afford one. She and her husband had inherited their house from Algy's father, and although Algy had a prestigious job valuing paintings for London's smartest auctioneers his salary barely kept them in pasta.

There followed a stilted attempt at conversation.

'So, Nancy, how are you settling into London?' asked Victoria politely.

'Weeell, I'm finding my feet. I've located the American library, signed on with an American doctor. Of course, the US school was full so we had to put Connor into the local one.'

Nancy was really getting into the English way of life, then.

'And Hayden?'

'Weeell, he's kinda busy at work. They've been doing a big takeover<sup>1</sup>. The cab comes for him at six.'

Philly sounded bright. 'Oh, that's not too bad. I know these banks can demand the most ghastly<sup>2</sup> hours. So he has the evening with you?'

Nancy looked nonplussed. 'I mean the cab comes at six in the *morning*. To go to Canary Wharf<sup>3</sup>. He's up at five. He gets home most nights at around eight.'

'Gosh<sup>4</sup>.' Philly was aghast. 'How does he keep going?'

'Oh, he's pretty health conscious. I watch his diet and I don't let him drink alcohol in the week. And we go jogging at the weekend, that kinda thing.'

Wow, thought Victoria, life was a bundle of fun for Hayden Masters.

'But I still have some things to sort out,' continued Nancy.

Philly seized deftly on the opportunity to make some suggestions. 'Maybe we can give you some pointers. Algy and I have been here for ten years so we know virtually everyone.'

Nancy seemed doubtful. 'I'm kinda hoping to find a decent hairdresser. I find the salons here a little ... dull.' Her eyes took in Philly's chubby face and her lank brown hair, pushed back for the occasion with a velvet Alice band. 'You see, I need *volume* in my hair, but I cannot find anyone here who can really backcomb.'

Victoria thought that Nancy's hair was immaculate already, platinum blonde with the ends curled neatly outwards. But she knew just the man to take her on. 'Jean-Pierre. He's excellent. I'll write down his number for you.'

'Is he American?'

'French.'

Nancy looked disappointed, but evidently decided to change the subject. 'Let me pass you some biscuits.' [...]

'And how is Ute doing?' enquired Victoria.

Nancy sighed. 'I suppose I can't complain. We had such a wonderful Mexican lady in

<sup>1</sup> takeover: (*here*) taking control of a company

<sup>2</sup> ghastly: frightening, bad and unpleasant

<sup>3</sup> Canary Wharf: large business and shopping development, in the London Docklands

<sup>4</sup> Gosh: 'Oh my God'

Dallas. All legal, of course. We paid for her to be naturalised. Hayden can't take any chances with employing *aliens*.'

Philly choked on her biscuit.

55 Victoria translated: 'Aliens are illegal immigrants. It's the American term.'

Nancy pushed on regardless: 'But it's so hard to get domestics here. Ute is my third au pair already.'

Philly and Victoria exchanged a glance. Consuela had been with Victoria for nearly five years.

60 Nancy brushed a non-existent crumb from her spotless white polo shirt. 'She's fine with cleaning and shopping, but she struggles a little with Connor's homework. And I really cannot trust her with the ironing. I'm having to have all that sent out.'

'Perhaps she has difficulties with the language,' said Philly, trying to be helpful.

'I can't help that! She has to take responsibility for her own learning.'

*Wives and Lovers*, Jane Elizabeth VARLEY, 2003

## I. COMPRÉHENSION

### NOTE IMPORTANTE AUX CANDIDATS :

Les candidats traiteront le sujet **sur la copie qui leur sera fournie** en respectant l'**ordre des questions** et en faisant apparaître la **numérotation** (numéro et lettre repère le cas échéant, ex: 15b - **voir en particulier les questions 6 et 10**). Ils composeront des phrases complètes chaque fois qu'il leur est demandé de rédiger les réponses. **Le nombre de mots** indiqué constitue une exigence minimale. En l'absence d'indication, les candidats répondront brièvement à la question posée. Les **citations** seront limitées aux éléments **pertinents** et précédées de la mention de la ligne.

1. Nancy Masters, Philly Bingham and Victoria are the three main female characters. Alex, Algy, Connor, Hayden and Rufus are male characters. Each of them is related to one of the three women. Say in what way.

2. How did Alex, Connor and Rufus get to know each other?

3. Where is the scene set (country, city)? In whose house?

4. How long has Nancy been living there and where did she use to live?

5. What does her home reveal about her standard of living? Explain in your own words. (20 words)

6. a) What do we learn about Nancy's husband's working hours?

b) l. 29 'I mean the cab comes at six in the *morning*.'

Why does Nancy feel the need to insist on 'morning'?

7. How does Nancy make sure such working hours have no consequence on her husband's health? (30 words)

8. l. 34 'Wow, thought Victoria, life was a bundle of fun for Hayden Masters'

Explain in your own words what Victoria really thinks of Hayden's life. (30 words)

9. Has Nancy adopted the culture and way of life of the country she is now living in? Answer in your own words (25 words), then quote at least four elements to support your answer.

10. a) From line 50 to the end Ute and Consuela are discussed. Say who they are.  
b) Contrast Nancy's and Victoria's respective attitudes towards them. (40 words)

11. Who is Philly more likely to feel closer to, Nancy or Victoria? Quote the text to support your answer.

12. To describe the relationships between Victoria, Philly and Nancy the four following titles are all possible. Choose the one you prefer and argue your case. (40 words)

An Attempt at Conversation  
'Desperate Housewives'  
The Beginning of a Beautiful Friendship  
'Pride and Prejudice'

## II. EXPRESSION

**Choose subject 1 (a+b) or subject 2.**

Subject 1 (a+b):

a) II. 4-6 'Connor was becoming popular with his classmates on account of the hundreds of electronic toys and state-of-the-art computer games that filled his enormous bedroom.'  
Does popularity depend on what you have? (150 words)

b) I. 16 'Algy had a prestigious job valuing paintings for London's smartest auctioneers.'  
What is your idea of a prestigious job? (150 words)

Subject 2:

I. 65 'She has to take responsibility for her own learning.'  
To what extent is an individual responsible for his/her learning or professional training? (300 words)