

SESSION 2003

BACCALAUREAT GENERAL

ANGLAIS

Série L

Langue vivante I

Durée : 3 heures - Coefficient 4

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

Barème appliqué pour la correction

<i>Compréhension écrite</i> <i>Expression</i>	<i>14</i>
<i>Traduction</i>	<i>6</i>

Ce sujet comporte 7 pages.

I knew something was odd at home when, after we had eaten our dinner, my dad followed my mum, Carl and me into the living room to sit down. This usually did not happen. Dinner was just an interruption from my dad's jobs around the house. On Sundays after church Dad was always fixing, painting, adjusting or mending. He was always, 'in the middle of a job', that required his full, silent concentration and a monkey wrench¹. If I ever asked him what he was doing he'd say, 'Fixing something, so don't come bothering me now.' [...]

But this was not the only strange thing. It used to be strange for us to go into the living room at all. It was always kept for best with Mum's carefully embroidered runners on the sideboard and school photographs of Carl and me smiling and showing our teeth in various stages of hideous development. [...] Now we were adults, however, we could go in the room any time we pleased, our parents convinced that we would no longer damage one of the glass ornaments or spill out tea on the furry fireside rug. But as I walked into the room I saw six, maybe seven of my mum and dad's boxes piled up in a corner. My eye was drawn to them because they were out of place and nothing was ever out of place in that room. The boxes were also full, sealed across the top, bottom and sides with wide brown tape.

'What are these doing here?' I asked, going over to them. I turned round and watched as Dad looked at Mum, Mum looked at Carl, Carl looked at Dad and then back at Mum. But nobody looked at me.

'What's going on?' I looked at them all one by one. Then another strange thing happened: my dad spoke first.

'Sit down, Faith,' he said. He began to finger the knuckles on his hand, feeling each one in turn. He used to do this when it was time to discuss the 'could do better' bits in my school report. I began to get scared.

'No, I won't sit down.' I wasn't sure why I said that but I felt like someone in a film who was about to be told something that would make them scream and pull at their hair. Unfortunately everyone else sat down and I had to stay standing. Nobody spoke so I placed my hands on my hips.

Dad started, 'Your mum and me,' then faltered. He began again, 'Me and your mum,' and stopped. He went back to, 'Your mum and me.' I looked at my mum who was looking at her knees and pulling imaginary hairs off her skirt, while Dad continued to stutter his various permutations. He was onto, 'We,' when I said, 'What?' [...]

'Come, Wade,' Mum said, looking impatiently at my dad who had still not completed a sentence.

'Your mum and me are thinking of going back home,' Dad said finally.

I thought of our old council flat where Carl and me had grown up. Although we had lived in Crouch End for years, it was the crumbling flat in Stoke Newington that I thought of as home. The blue door with the silver number twenty-three and a knocker that could be heard anywhere in the flat. With the drain-pipe in the bathroom, where bathwater from the flats above could be heard rushing through. My bedroom with its council-pink walls and tiny bed where I put my discarded teeth under the pillow and the tooth fairy would replace them with a sixpence.

I thought in that moment that my parents had somehow lost all their money. That Mum was having to leave her job as a district nurse; the old folk cured, the district cutting back. That Dad's business - which he had built up so carefully with sixteen-hour days, including Saturdays and Sundays, and evenings spent writing invoices in his best handwriting in a little blue book - had after all gone bust. I thought they were having to move out of the house. The house in a proper street that they were so proud of they sent pictures of it to relatives with invitations to come and stay.

'You going back to the flat?' I asked.

Carl sniggered and I knew I was wrong.

'No, Faith,' Mum said. 'We're thinking of going home to Jamaica'

And my reaction was, 'For a holiday. Fantastic! How long for?'

'Not for a holiday, Faith,' Dad said hesitantly. 'Your mum and me are thinking...' He held up his hand, 'Only thinking, mind, of going back there to live. To get a little place and live.'

Andrea Levy, *Fruit of the Lemon*, 2000

¹ *monkey wrench* : clef anglaise

COMPREHENSION – EXPRESSION

Read the whole text.

1. a) What sort of narrative is it ?

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b) Give the narrator's name.

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2. Who are the other characters ? Give their names and occupations when possible. Say how they are related to the narrator.

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3. Pick out three elements showing that the narrator is no longer a child.

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4. a) What makes it an unusual day ? Pick out three different details.

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b) **In your own words**, contrast that particular day with the family routine.
(30/40 words)

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Read the text again from line 16 to line 33.

5. a) Pick out three elements describing the father's attitude.

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b) **In your own words**, analyse his attitude.

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c) To what extent can this analysis be applied to the mother? Justify your answer with one quotation.

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6. Focus on the narrator.

a) Select words from the list below to characterise the narrator's attitude and feelings :

absent-minded – carefree - excluded - frightened –

puzzled – relaxed – theatrical - trustful

Illustrate your choice by quoting from the text.

words selected	quotations
1.
2.
3.
4.

b) 'No, I won't sit down' (line 24). Comment on this answer.

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Read from line 34 to the end.

7. a) What do the parents want to tell the narrator ?

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b) What does the word 'home' mean for the narrator ?

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c) What does the narrator imagine has happened to her parents ? **Use your own words.** (40 words)

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d) Is she right ? Justify your answer with a quote.

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8. Why doesn't 'home' correspond to the same place for the narrator and her parents ? (40 words)

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9. Taking into account the different places mentioned, retrace the family's history. What can you deduce about the evolution of their standard of living ? (60 words)

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TRADUCTION

Translate from line 1 ('I knew something was odd ...') to line 6 ('...don't come bothering me now').

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