

EXAMEN DE FIN D'ÉTUDES SECONDAIRES GÉNÉRALES
Sessions 2023 – QUESTIONNAIRE ÉCRIT

Date :	19.05.23	Durée :	08:15 - 11:15	Numéro candidat :	
Discipline :	Anglais	Section(s) :	GCC / GCF / GCG / GCGSL / GCG_ANGDF / GMM		

PART A

DICTIONARIES ARE NOT ALLOWED FOR THIS PART

Essential Articles (15 marks)

‘Why are we wasting?’ (7m)

1) Which possibilities to reduce food waste does the text provide?

‘There’s a population crisis all right. But probably not the one you think.’ (8m)

2) Explain why the author disagrees with the idea that climate change can be stopped by reducing human overpopulation.

Short Stories (15 marks)

‘Dip in the Pool’ (Roald Dahl) (7m)

3) Describe how the auction was organised and which betting options there were.

‘The Third and Final Continent’ (Jhumpa Lahiri) (8m)

4) What does the reader find out about the circumstances of Mala’s and the narrator’s marriage and their **first week** as a married couple?

PART B**DICTIONARIES ARE ALLOWED FOR THIS PART****We all like to snoop just as much as big tech**

The internet has normalised surveillance and monitoring other people is now part of everyday life.

Dave Eggers's novel *The Circle*, a prophetic¹ drama about the coming horrors of big tech, ends with the most hair-raising internet privacy crisis in fiction. One of the protagonists, a despairing technophobe² named Mercer, drives his truck over a cliff as he is pursued by a squadron of camera drones. The drones do not want to kill Mercer, merely to transmit footage of his every word and gesture to an appreciative audience of millions. "This," the spectators agree as Mercer's car smashes through the concrete barriers guarding the mountain path, "was the greatest viewing experience of their lives."

We are familiar with the idea that the internet is a surveillance state, that as we cross its territory our almost every move is tracked by the algorithms³ of Facebook or Google. But in his book Eggers saw something more sinister⁴: that ordinary people would become just as keen to monitor their fellow citizens as tech companies are. And once we — the citizen informants of the internet's surveillance state — got used to keeping track of one another online, we would start to do the same in real life, too.

Over the past decade or so we have become accustomed to intruding into other people's private lives and judging what we see.

The fundamental condition of being online is one of casual surveillance, the constant semi-suspicious monitoring of other people's private lives. Scrolling through Facebook and Twitter, we are like security guards slumped in front of banks of CCTV display screens, casually accepting our unseen intrusion into other people's private lives and in a permanent stage of semi-conscious moral surveillance, waiting for the moment our intervention may be required.

This attitude is augmented by the basic mechanisms through which we engage with social media: like or don't like, upvote or downvote. Over the last decade or so, we have become narcissistically⁵ accustomed to the idea that our approval matters. We monitor this little world in our pockets with the spoiled entitlement of Roman emperors: all-seeing and all-judging. Thumbs up, thumbs down, thumbs up, thumbs down.

Most vicious, perhaps, are the service apps which explicitly impose the internet habit of surveillance on the real world. Ordering a car on Uber or a meal on Deliveroo, you watch the progress of the driver approaching your house. If he were to stop for a cigarette or a sandwich you would see that, and you might quite easily find yourself judging him.

When the food or the car arrives, the apps invite you to assess the performance of the driver. On Uber you can assign a star rating and then press a little cartoon that stands for a particular attribute (a diamond for "excellent service", a detergent bottle for a "neat and tidy" car). These images, it has always struck me, are reminiscent of the emojis Facebook offers its users to react to posts with. And it is at this point that the circle closes: we now watch and respond to a class of people (who, it should be said, are almost invariably poorer and more precariously employed than we are) as if they were not human beings but posts.

This feeling that it is our right to see so much and to judge nearly everything represents an important psychological departure from the pre-internet society which shared a deep scepticism about our right to assume positions of moral authority over other people. It expressed its reticence to judge others in sayings such as: “don’t be so judgmental”, “judge not lest ye be judged” or “walk a mile in someone else’s shoes”.

If there is hope, it is that the internet itself has been becoming more private for several years now, as users prefer to communicate in the sealed environments of WhatsApp chats and specialised Facebook groups rather than in the dangerous public arenas of Twitter or on Facebook’s newsfeed. If the end of our present era of mass mutual surveillance is to come at all, it will come, rather ironically, from the internet. (693 words)

Adapted from: *World and Press* - November 2, 2021

Word explanations:

- 1: **prophetic**: accurately predicting what will happen in the future
- 2: **a technophobe**: a person who fears, dislikes, or avoids new technology
- 3: **an algorithm**: a process of rules to be followed in calculations or other operations by a computer
- 4: **sinister**: evil; giving the impression that something harmful is going to happen
- 5: **narcissistically (adv.); narcissistic (adj.)**: vain(ly), having or showing an excessive interest in or admiration of oneself

A) Comprehension Questions (15 marks)

Answer the following questions in your own words. Do not copy from the text.

- 1) Explain what happens at the end of Dave Eggers’ novel ‘The Circle’ and how this can be seen as a “sinister” prediction of people’s behaviour towards their fellow citizens in real life. (5 marks)

- 2) Explain how people use the internet to monitor and judge other people’s lives. Give examples. (7 marks)

- 3) Explain the author’s message of hope at the end of the text. (3 marks)

Development Essay (15 marks)

Write a well-structured essay of around 250 (+/-10%) words about the topic below. Include a word count.

Law-abiding* citizens do not need to worry about being monitored or spied on online. Discuss.

**law-abiding: respecting the laws/rules of society*

Attention: Do NOT restate ideas from the text!