

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

Date :	08.06.23	Durée :	08:15 - 11:15	Numéro candidat :	
Discipline :	Anglais	Section(s) :	GCC / GCF / GCG / GCGSL / GCG_ANGDF / GMM		

PART A – KNOWN TEXTS

DICTIONARIES ARE NOT ALLOWED FOR THIS PART

Essential Articles (15 marks)

There's a population crisis alright...

1) Which population crisis needs to truly be addressed? Why? (8 m)

Poverty or poison

2) Where does a majority of e-waste end up? Why? (7 m)

Short Stories (15 marks)

Dip in the Pool (Roald Dahl)

3) Give an account of the elements in the story that suggest that Mr. Botibol is a very cautious man before and after placing the bet. (7 m)

The Third and Final Continent (Jhumpa Lahiri)

4) Explain to what extent the narrator has adapted to a new culture, first in London and later in the USA. (8 m)

PART B – UNKNOWN TEXT***DICTIONARIES ARE ALLOWED FOR THIS PART*****A four-day week might benefit employers as well.**

Britain, in the 1840s, a campaign to reduce the length of the working day in factories from 12 hours to 10 prompted predictions of disaster. One parliamentarian called the idea “dangerous” while another warned such “mistaken philanthropy” would prevent workers from providing for their families.

But in 1846, parliament heard the results of an experiment run by an owner of large mills in Manchester and Preston. When he reduced the working day to 11 hours, he found production volumes remained the same and the quality of work improved. “It is, I believe, a fact not to be questioned that there is more bad work made [in] the last one or two hours, than the whole of the first nine or 10 hours,” he said.

Similarly, when Henry Ford reduced the working week in his car factories from six days to five with no cut in pay in 1926, the decision followed several years of experiments which had assured him production would not suffer. “We can get at least as great production in five days as we can in six, and we shall probably get a greater, for the pressure will bring better methods,” he said.

Almost a century later, several companies want to find out if they can shrink the working week even more. A large experiment in Iceland cut the working week of thousands of staff from 40 hours a week to 35 or 36 without a reduction in output. In the UK, about 30 businesses have signed up to a six-month trial of a bolder proposition: a four-day week with no reduction in pay.

Most objections to the idea of a four-day week focus on the practicalities. Would the business suffer? What would happen to people who already work four days for 20 percent less pay? Would crunching five days’ worth of work into four put too much pressure on people, or mean that even more work spills out into our supposedly “free time” under the radar?

The experiments should provide some tentative answers. Shaun Rutland, chief executive of gaming company Hutch, which has signed up for the trial, says work in creative industries always expands to fill the time available. He hopes the four-day week will make staff happier and prompt new efficiencies.

Some changes will be simple: meetings will default to half an hour rather than an hour, for example. The staff members who work four days already will be moved to full-time pay. But he says some staff are worried the place will start to feel less friendly if there is more time pressure. Hutch will measure the frequency and quality of game updates and use regular surveys to track the happiness of staff. Rutland is open to the experiment ending in success, failure, or something in between. “If in six months our quality goes down, they’re too stressed over four days,” he says.

The bigger question is whether the push for a four-day week can address the most urgent problems in the 21st-century world of work. For a start, the workplaces which seriously overwork their staff are not the ones taking part in experiments like this. Goldman Sachs, for example, is in some ways in another century: it recently promised to enforce Saturdays off for junior bankers complaining about 95-hour week.

More importantly, in low-paid sectors like retail, hospitality, and care, the bigger problem is the unpredictability of the working week. It is common for employers in these sectors to put staff on zero-hour or part-time contracts, then flex their hours up and down with scant notice. Overwork one week could turn to underemployment the next. A UK survey last year found 55 per cent of full-time low-paid workers were given less than a week's notice of their schedule, and 15 per cent got less than 24 hours. Tackling this requires more targeted policies, such as the "fair workweek" scheduling laws implemented by some US cities.

While these issues need different solutions, the common thread is that both white-collar and blue-collar workers want employers to be less greedy with their time. If history is any guide, that might prove beneficial for companies in the long run too. (693 words)

Adapted from: *The Financial Times*. March 21, 2022.

A) Comprehension Questions (15 marks)

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

- 1) How has the idea of reduced working hours been perceived and tested across history up until this day included? (8 m)

- 2) What are the issues that accompany the discussions around a four-day working week? (7 m)

B) Development Essay (15 marks)

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

Live to work or work to live. A positive work-life balance is more important than money and success. Discuss.

Attention: Do NOT restate ideas from the text!