

IPESUP ADMISSIONS PARALLÈLES 2015



Réussir l'épreuve orale d'anglais aux concours



1. Rappel des épreuves de langue des concours : format et durée
2. Critères d'évaluation
3. Comment se préparer ?
4. Réussir l'épreuve sur document
5. Aborder sereinement les questions personnelles
6. Pour une communication efficace
7. Pour ne pas parler anglais comme une vache française
8. Epreuve orale blanche entièrement corrigée
9. Textes récents d'actualité britannique et américaine

1. Rappel du format de l'épreuve

CONCOURS ESCP Europe

Durée : 15 minutes

Préparation : 15 minutes

Support : texte en anglais (le concours précise : texte *récent* d'actualité anglophone)

Déroulement de l'épreuve

L'épreuve se déroule en deux parties :

- Le candidat présente dans la langue concernée, un exposé de ce qu'il a lu et compris ainsi qu'un commentaire plus personnel du texte
- Echanges avec l'examineur

2. Critères d'évaluation

Quel que soit le format de l'épreuve, les examinateurs cherchent à évaluer l'aisance des candidats en anglais et leur capacité à exprimer des idées clairement dans une langue idiomatique.

Ne pensez pas néanmoins que votre seule maîtrise de l'anglais déterminera votre note. Il s'agit certes d'une épreuve de langue, mais ne négligez pas l'aspect de communication qu'implique toute épreuve orale.

L'examineur prendra en compte les aspects suivants, en accordant plus ou moins d'importance à chaque critère.

2.1. Compétences linguistiques

- Compréhension d'un document oral ou écrit, et compréhension des questions de l'examineur
- Autonomie langagière et fluidité : il s'agit de la capacité du candidat à s'exprimer avec aisance, sans chercher ses mots sans arrêt ou répondre par monosyllabes.
- Correction de la grammaire et complexité des structures utilisées
- Diversité et précision du vocabulaire employé
- Authenticité de l'accent

Ainsi, en ce qui concerne la langue elle-même, le jury va à la fois repérer les fautes (de grammaire, de prononciation, etc.), en sanctionnant surtout les fautes graves (comme les fautes d'accord ou de verbes irréguliers) et apprécier la clarté et la richesse de l'expression.

2.2. Contenu

Présentation d'un document écrit ou audio :

- Capacité à rendre compte clairement du contenu du document dans ses propres mots dans une synthèse structurée
- Compréhension des idées du document et de leur contexte ainsi que des références culturelles qu'il contient
- Pertinence et intérêt des idées développées dans le commentaire, lorsque celui-ci est demandé
- Maîtrise des techniques de traduction, lorsque la traduction d'un passage de l'anglais vers le français est demandée
- Justesse et pertinence des réponses, originalité du point de vue exprimé
- Connaissance de la civilisation et de la culture des pays anglophones

Questions personnelles sur le candidat :

- Appréciation de la motivation, de la personnalité et du parcours du candidat
- Clarté et originalité des idées

2.3. Communication

- Débit, volume et articulation
- Contact visuel avec l'examineur, gestion des notes
- Attitude générale

3. Comment se préparer ?

3.1. Préparer l'épreuve sur document

Il est indispensable de lire la presse anglo-saxonne, regarder les journaux télévisés en langue anglaise et écouter la radio. Cela vous permettra de :

- vous entraîner à la compréhension orale, ce qui vous sera utile, d'une part, pour comprendre le document audio qui est le support de l'épreuve dans certains concours, et d'autre part pour comprendre les questions de l'examineur,
- lire plus rapidement les articles de presse, et vous familiariser avec leur structure,
- connaître le vocabulaire de base pour pouvoir parler des grands thèmes d'actualité (comment dit-on en anglais un passeur ? des écoutes téléphoniques ? décapiter ?),
- suivre l'actualité, ce qui vous permettra à la fois d'étoffer vos commentaires, de trouver des exemples pour illustrer vos idées, et de répondre aux éventuelles questions du jury sur les événements récents.

Il est conseillé de lire des articles de la presse britannique ET américaine. Tous les journaux et magazines ont un site Internet et l'accès à la plupart des articles récents y est quasiment toujours gratuit.

Presse britannique

<i>The Guardian</i>	http://www.theguardian.com/uk
<i>The Independent</i>	http://www.independent.co.uk/
<i>The Times</i>	http://www.timesonline.co.uk/
<i>The Economist</i>	http://www.economist.com

Presse américaine

<i>The New York Times</i>	http://www.nytimes.com/
<i>The Washington Post</i>	http://www.washingtonpost.com/
<i>The International Herald Tribune</i>	http://www.ihb.com/
<i>Time</i>	http://www.time.com/time/
<i>Newsweek</i>	http://www.newsweek.com/
<i>US News and World Report</i>	http://www.usnews.com

En ce qui concerne télévision et radio, le plus simple est également d'utiliser Internet pour suivre l'actualité.

Télévision

CNN	http://www.cnn.com
-----	---

BBC <http://www.bbc.co.uk/tv/>

Radio

NPR (US) <http://www.npr.org/>
BBC Radio 4 (GB) <http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio4/>
ABC (Australie) <http://www.abc.net.au/>

On trouve sur les sites de la BBC et de CNN des documents audio accompagnés du script et de fiches de vocabulaire, qui sont des outils très utiles pour travailler la compréhension orale de façon autonome.

BBC Learning English <http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/>
CNN Student News <http://edition.cnn.com/studentnews/>

Pour assimiler efficacement le vocabulaire utile pour parler des sujets d'actualité, faites des fiches pour lister les mots clés indispensables sur chaque grand thème. Ainsi, une fiche sur les élections contiendrait :

<i>go to the polls</i>	aller voter
<i>be neck and neck</i>	être au coude à coude
<i>seat</i>	siège
<i>an overall majority</i>	une majorité absolue
	etc.

3.2. Préparer les questions personnelles

La réflexion que vous aurez engagée pour préparer l'entretien en français va bien sûr vous être bien utile pour orienter le contenu de vos réponses dans l'épreuve d'anglais. Cependant, il faut garder à l'esprit que l'examineur veut aussi et surtout évaluer vos capacités à parler de vous et de vos motivations en anglais. Le plus important est donc de préparer les outils linguistiques, en particulier le vocabulaire, qui seront nécessaires pour aborder les domaines qui intéressent le jury :

- **votre parcours**, en particulier s'il est un peu original (si vous avez étudié dans une école bilingue ou vécu à l'étranger par exemple).
- **vos loisirs** (ne vous contentez pas de dire que vous aimez le cinéma et la musique, soyez plus précis et expliquez ce qui vous plaît). L'examineur peut vous demander également de lui parler du dernier livre que vous avez lu ou du dernier film que vous avez vu.
- **les voyages que vous avez faits** jusqu'à présent – en particulier en pays anglophones, mais pas seulement. En fonction de votre réponse, l'examineur pourra vous poser des questions factuelles sur les pays visités et vous demander vos impressions.
- **les raisons pour lesquelles vous voulez intégrer une école de commerce**, et celle dans laquelle vous passez l'épreuve en particulier

- **vos projets professionnels**, et plus généralement vos projets d'avenir (par exemple : souhaitez-vous travailler à l'étranger ?).

Vous trouverez dans la partie 7.3. du vocabulaire utile pour préparer cette phase de l'épreuve.

4. Réussir l'épreuve sur document

4.1. Utiliser au mieux le temps de préparation

Si l'épreuve proprement dite est précédée d'un temps de préparation, vous devez être efficace pendant cette phase cruciale, et rester calme même si vous ne comprenez pas grand-chose au document en question. Dans tous les cas vous ne devez pas rédiger entièrement vos notes : d'une part ce n'est pas parce que vous aurez écrit des phrases à l'avance que vous ferez moins de fautes d'anglais, et d'autre part vous serez lourdement sanctionné-e si vous lisez ce texte devant l'examineur – il ne s'agit pas d'une épreuve de lecture à haute voix, mais d'un échange verbal entre deux individus.

4.1.1. Si vous avez un document audio à écouter

Il est clairement spécifié dans le descriptif des épreuves (v. 1) que le candidat peut manipuler librement le lecteur de CD ou le lecteur MP3. Il peut donc écouter l'enregistrement autant de fois qu'il le souhaite, et repasser certains passages difficiles. Ce n'est cependant pas nécessairement un avantage : trop de candidats passent l'intégralité du temps de préparation à écouter frénétiquement le document sans réfléchir à ce qu'ils pourront en dire. Il est certainement préférable de s'en tenir à trois écoutes, la première se faisant sans prise de notes et en restant calme (dans la mesure du possible !) Pendant les deux autres écoutes il conviendra de prendre des notes qui ne pourront bien sûr être exhaustives.

Il faut bien garder en tête pendant cette phase de préparation un peu stressante que le but n'est pas de comprendre le document dans son intégralité : il faut saisir les idées principales et pouvoir restituer leurs articulations.

4.1.2. Si vous avez un texte à lire

- Préparez un résumé : repérez la structure du texte et ses idées principales. Prenez des notes succinctes, en mettant bien en évidence les articulations du texte, et en essayant de mobiliser d'ores et déjà vocabulaire et tournures qui vous permettront de reformuler le contenu du texte. Ne rédigez pas entièrement votre résumé : lire vos notes pendant l'entretien serait tout simplement désastreux !
- Réfléchissez à des éléments de commentaire (même si un commentaire n'est pas formellement demandé) et à la façon de les formuler de façon précise et idiomatique. Ces idées pourront se révéler très utiles quand s'engagera l'échange avec l'examineur.

4.2. Synthétiser et reformuler un document

4.2.1. L'introduction et le compte rendu

Avant de proposer le résumé proprement dit, il convient d'introduire brièvement le texte, en mentionnant sa source, sa date de publication (si elle est importante), son auteur (s'il est mentionné), et en présentant en quelques mots son sujet, de façon suffisamment précise.

Ex : *In this article published in May 2015 in The New York Times, the journalist examines several possible ways for California to cope with water shortages.*

Le sujet du texte peut également être présenté sous forme de question, ce qui permet de mieux en cerner la spécificité. Il peut être aussi tout à fait pertinent de mentionner le type de texte auquel on a affaire : un texte purement informatif sur un événement précis est en effet bien différent d'un article de fond présentant une analyse ou une opinion.

On peut ensuite annoncer clairement le plan de sa présentation, en particulier quand résumé et commentaire sont exigés.

Ex : *First, I'll give a brief outline of the passage, then I'll comment on two issues it raises.*
C'est cependant clairement déconseillé dans les oraux de la banque Tremplin 1.

Le résumé est un compte rendu synthétique de toutes les idées principales du texte, qui doivent être présentées de façon concise mais néanmoins précise. Le résumé peut suivre la structure du texte, à condition que celle-ci soit logique. Le candidat pourra néanmoins dans certains cas avoir à réorganiser les idées pour proposer un résumé plus cohérent. Dans tous les cas, il convient de bien mettre en relief les articulations entre les différentes parties.

Dans cette partie de l'épreuve vous ne devez pas apporter d'élément de commentaire ni donner votre opinion. Vous aurez très certainement la possibilité de le faire par la suite. Enfin, l'erreur la plus courante des candidats qui doivent résumer un document est de produire une sorte de « copié-collé » de phrases qui en sont directement tirées. Vous devez reformuler les idées du texte, même si vous craignez de faire des fautes d'anglais en utilisant vos propres mots. Il est néanmoins possible de citer le texte, mais les citations doivent être courtes et exceptionnelles. On peut en revanche faire référence à certains passages de l'article si nécessaire (ex : *As the journalist clearly explains in the second paragraph...*).

4.2.2. Le commentaire

Cette partie ne doit surtout pas être négligée, car non seulement elle permet d'évaluer le niveau d'anglais du candidat, mais également ses capacités de réflexion et d'analyse. Il faut donc éviter de passer trop de temps (de sa préparation et de sa présentation) sur le compte rendu : il faudrait passer au moins la moitié de son temps de parole sur le commentaire, mais les meilleurs candidats parviennent à faire un résumé suffisamment concis pour consacrer plus de temps au commentaire.

La transition entre le résumé et le commentaire devra éclairer le lien entre le texte et le sujet traité. Il convient d'annoncer clairement ce passage entre les deux parties, par exemple par un simple :

After this brief account of the article, I'd now like to comment on some issues it raises.
ou en introduisant directement le sujet choisi pour le commentaire :

Now, in my commentary, I would like to examine / analyze / explain why / how, etc.

Le commentaire peut prendre diverses formes, mais il faut à tout prix éviter d'être amené à répéter le contenu du document (qu'on vient de résumer). Le choix du sujet traité dans le commentaire est donc primordial : il doit être lié à celui du document, sans être bien sûr le même. Un autre écueil consiste à se contenter d'exprimer une opinion sur le sujet abordé, en particulier en utilisant des termes un peu réducteurs comme *good* ou *bad*. Il est bien sûr légitime d'exprimer une opinion personnelle, mais les candidats qui s'en tiennent à un point de vue sont souvent bien vite à court d'idées et ne parviennent pas à développer leur commentaire.

Si vous avez peur de ne pas avoir grand-chose à dire dans cette partie, essayez par exemple de penser aux causes et aux conséquences de l'événement ou du phénomène abordé dans le document, et de trouver des exemples similaires ou, à l'inverse, des contre-exemples, pour adopter une démarche comparative. Vous pouvez également choisir d'adopter un point de vue critique sur le texte.

Votre commentaire doit par ailleurs être structuré, et vous devez mettre en relief l'articulation des idées dans vos transitions.

Si vous avez des connaissances à apporter pour étayer vos arguments, elles sont les bienvenues à condition qu'elles soient suffisamment précises et utilisées à bon escient. Evitez dans la mesure du possible les généralisations abusives, les jugements de valeur, les banalités. Essayez de nuancer vos affirmations et de commenter les exemples que vous proposez.

4.2.3. Conclure

En principe, la phrase de conclusion qui récapitule les points saillants de votre présentation est énoncée sur un ton qui ne laisse pas de place au doute : vous en avez bien terminé. Si vous craignez cependant que la fin de votre présentation ne soit pas signalée assez clairement, vous pouvez dire *This concludes my presentation*.

Dans tous les cas ne soyez pas embarrassé par le fait de terminer, et ne vous démobilisez pas : la suite de l'épreuve est importante, et vous devez rester bien concentré-e pour répondre aux questions qui vont suivre.

4.2.4. Les questions de l'examineur sur le document

Différents types de questions peuvent être posées dans cette partie de l'épreuve.

4.2.4.1. Questions de compréhension

- Compréhension générale
Si le sens global du document a été mal compris ou présenté de façon confuse, l'examineur commencera probablement par des questions d'ordre assez général.
- Compréhension d'un passage du texte (paragraphe, phrase)
Si l'examineur vous demande d'éclairer le sens d'une phrase, ou d'un passage plus long, il faut bien sûr éviter de le répéter : il faut reformuler le sens, et l'expliquer. Gardez toujours à l'esprit que le sens d'un passage d'un texte peut être déduit – au moins en partie – de son contexte, et que votre bon sens peut également être précieux !
- Questions de vocabulaire
Le jury peut vous demander d'expliquer le sens d'un mot ou d'une expression du texte. Son but peut être de tester la connaissance du vocabulaire, mais aussi dans certains cas de voir si vous pouvez déduire le sens d'un mot à partir de son contexte.

4.2.4.2. Commentaire, analyse, opinion

Les questions de l'examineur ne se limitent jamais à la seule compréhension du document. Il peut vous amener à donner votre opinion sur le sujet traité, à adopter un point de vue critique sur le texte, ou encore à utiliser vos connaissances pour analyser une question précise.

Les mêmes conseils que ceux donnés pour le commentaire (v. 4.2.2.) s'appliquent dans cette phase de l'épreuve.

4.2.4.3. Questions de connaissances

Si vous ne connaissez pas la réponse à une question factuelle, par manque de connaissances, vous pouvez émettre des hypothèses en soulignant bien que ce sont des suppositions :

It might be...

I'm not sure, but I think Capitol Hill is...

Si vous n'avez aucune idée de la réponse, inutile de jouer aux devinettes. Soyez honnête et reconnaissez simplement que vous ignorez la réponse.

I'm sorry but I don't know.

5. Aborder sereinement les questions personnelles

5.1 Se présenter (concours Tremplin 2)

Cette présentation doit bien évidemment être très sérieusement préparée – mais ne devra surtout pas, le jour J, donner l'impression d'être récitée mécaniquement. Il est nécessaire dans un premier temps de réfléchir aux informations que l'on va donner sur soi : leur pertinence dépend bien sûr de chacun. N'oubliez pas que l'on pourra également vous interroger sur vos qualités et vos défauts, ce qui est parfois délicat pour certains, qui se sentent mal à l'aise quand il s'agit de mettre en avant leurs atouts. Il est pourtant essentiel de savoir parler de ses qualités (et de ses défauts !) avec humilité mais objectivité. Si l'on veut être vraiment convaincant, on illustrera ses arguments par des exemples précis, qui seront plus percutants qu'une simple liste d'adjectifs.

5.2. Répondre aux questions de l'examineur

Si la présentation du candidat se fait dans le cadre d'une discussion libre, les questions du jury peuvent être plus ou moins ouvertes. Vous ne devez pas avoir peur des questions très générales ("*Tell me about yourself*" ou "*Can you introduce yourself?*"), qui désarçonnent souvent les candidats qui ne savent pas ce que le jury attend. Mais ce qui intéresse l'examineur, c'est précisément de savoir quel type d'information le candidat va choisir de donner, et de pouvoir rebondir sur un point qui lui paraît intéressant. Ainsi, si vous évoquez le fait que vous avez vécu quelques années dans un pays étranger, cet aspect sera certainement abordé dans une question ultérieure. Inutile donc de développer de vous-même un point ou un autre : une question générale appelle une réponse générale. Reportez-vous à la partie 3.2. pour savoir quel type d'information il est pertinent de mentionner.

Quelle que soit la question, il est très important d'y répondre précisément, car il faut absolument éviter de donner l'impression qu'on a préparé un développement tout fait que l'on va réciter quelle que soit la question posée. Certes, ce type d'entretien se prépare, mais certainement pas en apprenant par cœur des phrases toutes faites, qui font perdre toute spontanéité à l'échange. Il faut donc avoir des idées de réponse sur chaque sujet qui pourrait être abordé, et bien sûr avoir réfléchi aux formulations et cherché le vocabulaire nécessaire dans le dictionnaire. Mais le jury doit garder l'impression que l'échange est naturel et que le candidat prend en compte la spécificité de chaque question.

6. Pour une communication efficace

6.1. Compétences en matière de communication

Votre aptitude à communiquer de façon efficace et agréable avec l'examineur va être prise en compte dans votre note. Si vous avez des difficultés à vous exprimer clairement dans ce genre de contexte indéniablement stressant, il va falloir vous entraîner afin de donner une bonne impression de vous le jour J. Il est essentiel de :

- regarder votre interlocuteur pendant que vous parlez, même s'il prend des notes. Ne fixez pas le plafond ni le sol, et ne regardez vos notes que brièvement
- sourire, notamment au début et à la fin de votre prestation
- ne pas parler trop lentement ni trop vite, et éviter d'émailler son discours de « euh » et autres « enfin »
- bien articuler
- ne pas parler trop fort (mais c'est assez rare), ni trop bas (un défaut plus courant). Ayez toujours à l'esprit que le but de l'exercice est de communiquer avec la personne qui est en face de vous !
- neutraliser tous les tics et gestes intempestifs : ne tripotez pas votre stylo, ne vous touchez pas les cheveux ou le visage sans arrêt, maîtrisez un éventuel tapotement des doigts ou des pieds.

6.2. Conseils pour la discussion libre

Il faut dans la mesure du possible développer ses réponses, ne pas se contenter de quelques mots en attendant la prochaine question : c'est au candidat de parler, pas au jury ! Pour étoffer sa réponse, que ce soit à une question portant sur un document ou sur ses motivations, on peut :

- expliquer l'idée qu'on vient de donner,
- nuancer son propos,
- illustrer d'un ou plusieurs exemples.

Si vous ne comprenez pas la question vous pouvez demander au jury de la répéter :

Could you please repeat the question?

éventuellement plus lentement :

Would you mind repeating the question more slowly please?

ou de la reformuler, en disant par exemple :

I'm afraid I don't understand the question, could you please rephrase it?

En revanche il est absolument impensable de demander au jury de vous traduire un mot en anglais si vous ne le connaissez pas.

6.3. L'importance cruciale de la clarté de votre propos

Nous allons lister dans la partie suivante les fautes à éviter, qui doivent bien sûr retenir toute votre attention. Mais n'oubliez jamais que le problème le plus rédhibitoire est le manque de clarté de l'expression : si l'examineur ne comprend pas certaines de vos phrases, ou si votre expression est confuse, ou incohérente, votre note sera nécessairement très basse.

Si vous avez tendance à souffrir d'un manque de clarté, il serait certainement judicieux de simplifier votre expression (plutôt que d'utiliser de « belles » expressions à tort et à travers) et de faire des phrases assez courtes. Si vous avez à un moment donné l'impression de vous enliser dans une phrase dénuée de sens, n'hésitez pas à la recommencer pour reformuler votre propos.

6.4. La clé de la réussite : l'entraînement

Il est indispensable pour être prêt(e) le jour J de s'entraîner dans les conditions de l'épreuve : en plus des oraux que vous passez à Ipésup, n'hésitez pas à faire deux ou trois simulations devant un professeur, un ami, ou un parent qui peuvent vous poser des questions sur un document.

Il peut être également formateur pendant ces entraînements d'enregistrer sa prestation et de l'écouter pour repérer vos défauts (fautes d'anglais récurrentes, débit trop rapide, manque d'articulation, etc.)

Profitez de tous les conseils que nos professeurs vous donneront durant votre week-end de préparation aux oraux, faites chez vous le travail concernant la presse / radio / télévision anglo-saxonne.

S'agissant de votre présentation, vous devez bien sûr faire le lien entre la présentation que vous aurez travaillée pour vos entretiens d'admission et votre présentation en anglais, même si celle-ci est par nature plus courte et plus orientée vers les liens que vous pourriez avoir avec le monde anglophone (liens familiaux, voyages, intérêt culturel...)

Dites-vous surtout que quel que soit votre niveau en anglais, c'est parce que vous allez travailler les modalités bien spécifiques de ces épreuves que vous allez les réussir. Comme à peu près pour toutes les épreuves, la réussite ne s'improvise pas et vous devez tirer le meilleur des documents que nous vous distribuons, ainsi que de vos oraux blancs, pour progresser et pour réussir !

7. Pour ne pas parler anglais comme une vache française

7.1. Eviter les vilaines fautes de grammaire

Les fautes les plus courantes à l'oral concernent généralement :

- les accords : le -s de la 3^{ème} personne du singulier et celui du pluriel ont beaucoup d'importance aux yeux des examinateurs...
- les temps

Pour parler du contenu du document, on utilisera le présent.

The journalist mentions / focuses on / reminds us of...

Pour évoquer un événement passé et révolu, on ne peut utiliser que le prétérit.

I was born in Villeurbanne, but then I lived in Paris for ten years.

Le *present perfect* s'utilise pour parler d'une action qui a commencé dans le passé et qui continue dans le présent :

I have been a scout for five years. (Je suis scout depuis cinq ans)

- les articles

L'erreur la plus courante consiste à utiliser *the* alors que l'on a un emploi générique du nom.

Since I like Ø Economics and Ø Mathematics, I'd like to work in Ø banking.

- Autres fautes courantes

Évitez l'animisme (le fait d'utiliser un verbe normalement associé à un animé avec un sujet inanimé) :

~~*The text says that*~~ → *The journalist says that / The text is about*

Attention à

~~*As the journalist says it*~~

As it is mentioned in the last paragraph

Attention aux calques comme

~~*I have 18*~~ → *I am 18 (years old)*

Pour dire la date, même si la forme écrite est *January 10 2008* ou *10 January 2008*, on dira à l'oral

« *the tenth of January two thousand and eight* »

N'oubliez pas qu'il est tout à fait possible de vous corriger si une faute vous a malencontreusement échappé. Il faut bien sûr plutôt essayer de prévenir les fautes, mais l'auto-correction n'est pas bannie et elle est même dans une certaine mesure appréciée par les examinateurs.

7.2. Vocabulaire et expression

Dans ce domaine, il faut éviter à tout prix d'utiliser de façon systématique et artificielle des expressions toutes faites à des fins de remplissage. Cependant, il faut connaître les mots qui vous permettront de structurer votre propos, de le nuancer, de donner des exemples, etc., ainsi que le vocabulaire utile quand on parle d'un document journalistique.

7.2.1. Connecteurs du discours

Expliquer

<i>Actually, in fact</i>	en fait
<i>That is to say</i>	c'est-à-dire
<i>In other words, to put it another way</i>	autrement dit

Exprimer la cause

<i>Since, as</i>	puisque
<i>Given that</i>	étant donné que
<i>Insofar as, inasmuch as</i>	dans la mesure où

Exprimer la conséquence

<i>As a consequence, as a result</i>	par conséquent
<i>Therefore</i>	donc, par conséquent

Introduire un sujet

<i>As regards</i>	En ce qui concerne
-------------------	--------------------

Énumérer

<i>Moreover, furthermore, in addition</i>	de plus
<i>First, secondly</i>	premièrement, deuxièmement
<i>Lastly</i>	enfin

Comparer

<i>Similarly, in the same way</i>	de même
<i>In the same way as</i>	de la même façon que
<i>Unlike, contrary to</i>	contrairement à

Nuancer

<i>However</i>	cependant
<i>Yet, still</i>	pourtant
<i>Nevertheless, nonetheless</i>	néanmoins

Exprimer une concession

<i>Although, even though</i>	bien que
<i>In spite of, despite</i>	malgré
<i>Admittedly</i>	certes

Contraster

<i>Unlike, contrary to</i>	contrairement à
<i>On the contrary</i>	au contraire
<i>While, whereas</i>	alors que, tandis que

Introduire des exemples

<i>For example, for instance, such as</i>	par exemple
---	-------------

Exprimer une opinion

<i>To my mind, in my opinion</i>	à mon avis
<i>According to X</i>	selon X

Conclure, résumer

<i>To conclude, in conclusion</i>	en conclusion
<i>In a word</i>	en un mot
<i>To sum up</i>	en résumé

7.2.2. Autres mots et expressions utiles

<i>Raise the question / issue of</i>	soulever la question de
<i>A controversial issue</i>	une question polémique
<i>A case in point</i>	un bon exemple, un exemple typique
<i>Relevant</i>	pertinent
<i>Maintain, contend, argue (that)</i>	affirmer, soutenir
<i>Emphasise, underline</i>	souligner, insister sur
<i>Focus on</i>	se concentrer sur
<i>Qualify</i>	nuancer
<i>Agree / disagree (with sb on sth)</i>	être d'accord / ne pas être d'accord
<i>Comment (on sth)</i>	Commenter

Attention à ne pas utiliser la 3^{ème} personne du pluriel pour parler de vous-même :

~~We~~ will examine the consequences of this phenomenon → I

7.2.3. Pour varier son expression

Nous avons tous (c'est humain) tendance à utiliser les mêmes mots pour exprimer certaines idées. Pour lutter contre ce penchant, il est intéressant de réfléchir à l'avance aux synonymes qui permettront de varier l'expression et surtout de la rendre plus précise.

Ainsi, au lieu de répéter sans arrêt *important*, on pourra avoir recours aux adjectifs *crucial, major, outstanding, prime, huge, tremendous* ou encore *significant*... Attention, cependant : ces mots ne sont pas interchangeables et il convient de bien savoir dans quel contexte on peut les utiliser et quel est leur sens précis.

7.3. Parler de soi

7.3.1. Parler de son parcours scolaire

<i>High school</i>	le lycée
<i>A subject</i>	une matière
<i>A degree</i>	un diplôme (universitaire)
<i>Graduate</i>	obtenir son diplôme
ex : <i>I'm currently doing /completing a two-year marketing degree at Nanterre University. I will graduate this summer.</i>	

7.3.2. Parler de son expérience professionnelle

<i>An internship</i>	un stage
<i>An intern, a trainee</i>	un-e stagiaire
<i>Be responsible for / in charge of</i>	être responsable de
<i>Apply for a job</i>	postuler
<i>Teamwork</i>	le travail d'équipe

7.3.3. Parler de ses projets professionnels

<i>Advertising</i>	la publicité
<i>Banking</i>	la banque, la finance
<i>An accountant</i>	un comptable
<i>A lawyer</i>	un avocat
<i>Work abroad</i>	travailler à l'étranger
<i>Be hired / recruited by a firm</i>	être recruté par une entreprise
<i>Start a business / company</i>	créer une entreprise
<i>A rewarding job</i>	un métier enrichissant / rémunérateur
<i>A starting salary</i>	un salaire d'embauche
<i>In the short / long term</i>	dans l'immédiat / à long terme

7.3.4. Parler de sa motivation et de ses qualités

<i>Skills</i>	des compétences
<i>Qualifications</i>	des qualifications
<i>Be good at sth / doing sth</i>	être bon / doué en qqch / pour faire qqch
<i>Be a good fit for a job</i>	correspondre au profil d'un poste
<i>Be enthusiastic / dynamic</i>	être enthousiaste / dynamique
<i>Be passionate about</i>	être passionné par
<i>Set goals</i>	fixer des objectifs
<i>Achieve goals</i>	atteindre des objectifs
<i>Challenging projects</i>	des projets stimulants
<i>A strength, an asset</i>	un atout, une force

7.3.5. Parler de ses activités et de ses loisirs

<i>Extracurricular activities</i>	des activités extrascolaires
<i>A volunteer</i>	un bénévole
<i>Voluntary work</i>	du travail bénévole
<i>A charity</i>	une organisation caritative
<i>Sailing</i>	la voile
<i>Scuba diving</i>	la plongée sous-marine
<i>Horseriding</i>	l'équitation
<i>Captain a team</i>	être le capitaine d'une équipe

8. Un oral blanc entièrement corrigé

Vous trouverez dans cette partie une forme raccourcie d'une épreuve comprenant résumé et commentaire d'un texte (qui pourrait être proposé sous forme d'un document sonore en étant simplement lu), et entretien portant sur le document et sur le candidat.

Les réponses proposées ne sont pas les réponses parfaites qu'un jury attendrait d'un candidat, elles sont aussi conçues pour vous apporter du vocabulaire utile. Une bonne façon de progresser et de vous entraîner est d'ailleurs de vous astreindre à faire le travail vous mêmes, avant de lire les réponses proposées.

8.1. Texte

Is nothing sacred? Now even McDonald's has kale on the menu

The company will release a kale breakfast bowl in a trial at restaurants in Southern California.

In a radical new development, McDonald's, famous the world over for flogging cheeseburgers and chips for low prices, will offer kale as part of a new offering at restaurants in Southern California.

Kale, the leafy green 'superfood' beloved by health nuts the world over, makes up part of McDonald's new breakfast bowl, which also includes low-fat turkey sausage and egg white, as the fast food giant makes fresh efforts to overhaul its unhealthy image.

The breakfast bowl will be introduced on a trial at restaurants in Southern California, a part of the world that is known as a breeding ground for hot health fads - including current favourite 'bulletproof' coffee, or coffee with a healthy dose of butter and coconut oil added, that supposedly makes you alert and energized. Unlike regular coffee.

The offering comes a few months after the chain released a Big Mac advert which derided 'foodie' and vegetarian ingredients like soy, quinoa and kale.

But McDonald's executives hope the contradiction will appeal to a wider audience, as the company turns to new measures to improve its falling sales.

McDonald's recently unveiled a 'turnaround plan' aimed at reviving its ailing finances - the company recently reported a drop in sales, the latest in an 11-month straight sales decline.

It also recently unveiled a new marketing campaign, rebooting the famous Hamburglar character - what was once a chubby-cheeked scamp who stole burgers is now a slightly more sinister human character, with red leather gloves and a long black trenchcoat.

It's an unlikely redesign, but it's proved a hit with many, who were struck by the Hamburglar's new, 'sexy' look.

Elsewhere in the US, McDonald's is trying other methods to give its sales figures a shot to the heart - introducing delivery in New York City, as well as all-day breakfast and even custom burgers.

Whether the Southern California kale trial will be a success remains to be seen, but if it is, you may be able to order a side of kale with your burger on this side of the Atlantic soon.

Doug Bolton, *The Independent*, Saturday 09 May 2015

!! Attention : ne pas tourner la page !!

Pourquoi ne pas profiter de cet oral corrigé pour vous entraîner ? Comme nous l'avons écrit précédemment, l'entraînement est une des clés de cet exercice. Vous pouvez profiter de cet oral blanc corrigé pour vous entraîner ; cela suppose naturellement d'avoir consacré du temps à l'article ci-dessus.

Nous vous encourageons donc à consacrer 20 minutes de préparation pour lire le texte, préparer un résumé ainsi qu'un commentaire, au brouillon. S'il s'agit de votre tout premier entraînement à ce type d'exercice, ce qui est probablement le cas pour nombreux d'entre vous, il n'est pas indispensable de vous limiter dans le temps : si vous trouvez que 20 minutes est trop court vous pouvez vous accorder 30 minutes pour ce premier exercice.

Les oraux blancs à IPESUP seront en conditions réelles, pour vous entraîner aussi à la prise de note et à la préparation de votre commentaire en temps limité.

8.2. Résumé

In this article, which was published in the British daily newspaper *The Independent* in May this year, Doug Bolton presents with a sometimes ironic tone the latest move made by McDonald's to rebrand¹ itself.

The fast food chain has announced that a new item on the menu will be offered in some Californian restaurants as part of a trial – a healthy² breakfast bowl including egg white and kale³, a fashionable⁴ vegetable.

This is a new and rather unexpected development, which is nonetheless easy to explain: the company has had to deal with a fall in sales in the past few months and is trying hard to attract new customers.

It has also launched a new marketing campaign starring a brand new version of the Hamburglar, which is meant, with a series of other initiatives, to boost⁵ sales.

8.3. Commentaire

In my commentary, I would like to examine the influence of “health fads⁶” on society and in particular on companies' marketing strategies.

Health campaigns and the media in Western countries have undoubtedly done a good job at convincing us that a healthy diet is crucial to being fit and healthy. Most of us are now fully aware that we should avoid consuming too much sugar, salt and fat – but we still do of course, and the guilt⁷ it causes leads us to try and make up for our over-indulgence⁸ in chocolate chip cookies. The advice given in women's magazines by body-conscious celebrities makes us even more sheepish⁹ when we realize we cannot possibly exercise every day, detox every month, and cut down on 90% of what we currently eat.

The food industry has of course made the most of this guilt most of us are feeling, by introducing new products and new ways of producing food. The soaring popularity of organic food has for instance catered for people's craving for healthier food. Unlike other fads, it is probably here to stay – some trendy vegetables such as kale may not be as lucky. Quinoa is another example of superfood which is supposed to have many health

¹ *change its image*

² *sain, bon pour la santé*

³ *chou frisé*

⁴ *à la mode*

⁵ *augmenter*

⁶ *mode*

⁷ *culpabilité*

⁸ *abus*

⁹ *penaud*

benefits. But the very word 'superfood' is actually controversial. Although this category includes products with a high content of nutrients, in particular antioxidants and vitamins, its supposed effects on people's health has little scientific basis.

To conclude, I would like to give you my opinion about this type of food and the way the media and the food industry hype¹⁰ it. Although I'm of course health-conscious, like most people, I'm very sceptical when I see that new products are branded as very healthy and especially when they are said to prevent diseases such as cancer. This kind of claim sounds like a marketing ploy¹¹ to me, even when it is claimed to be scientifically proven. The journalist seems as doubtful, as his sarcastic remark about bulletproof coffee shows. It's true it really sounds overrated¹²!

8.4. Questions sur le texte

- 1. *Don't you think McDonald's could be genuinely¹³ concerned about its customers' health instead of being driven only by the need to "revive its ailing finances", as the journalist suggests?***

Well, I may be cynical, but I don't think companies are interested in anything except their bottom line¹⁴. So I definitely think this move is meant to boost its revenues, but in a way it doesn't really matter. The fact that healthy food can be available in fast food outlets is good news!

- 2. *Do you think the type of health craze you mentioned in your commentary is as fashionable in Europe as in the US?***

It's true that many fads were born in the US – bone broth¹⁵, for example, is now all the rage in NY City, and may become fashionable in Europe too, since it's supposed to help people lose weight. The Internet and social media have undoubtedly made it easier for fads to cross the Atlantic, and most of them do.

- 3. *Could you please explain the meaning of the verb 'overhaul', which is used in paragraph 2?***

It means the firm would like to radically change its image. This verb is used for machines as well, and implies that every part of this machine is repaired to make it work more effectively.

¹⁰ (informal) Promote or publicize (a product or idea) intensively, often exaggerating its importance or benefits

¹¹ stratagème

¹² surfait

¹³ sincèrement, réellement

¹⁴ résultat financier

¹⁵ bouillon

8.5. Questions personnelles

1. *Tell me about yourself.*

My name is Jean-Kévin Doubitchou, I'm 20 and I come from Lyon, where I've been living for 10 years now; but I was born in Marseille and most of my family lives there. I attend a DUT programme, which is a type of vocational¹⁶ course. My major is marketing and I like it so much that I would now like to enter XXX to get the best possible training¹⁷.

2. *Why a business school?*

I definitely need the pragmatic and professional approach a business school can offer. I'd like to have the opportunity to discover various aspects of the management of a company, to become more familiar with the way a business can be run efficiently, thanks to interesting lectures¹⁸ but also to internships in various companies. I also think I would benefit from learning to work in teams, because we are not used to doing this in high school, and I look forward to working on specific projects with other students, because this interaction seems essential in the business world.

XXX (name of school) would also give me the opportunity to learn Chinese and spend a semester in Shanghai or Beijing. I have been fascinated by the country since I visited southern China with my family, two years ago. It was an amazing experience!

3. *What are your career plans?*

Well, after graduating from business school, I'd like to gain some experience by working in various firms. I would like to hold several positions¹⁹ in different departments to get the best possible training. Because in the longer term, I plan to start my own business. Actually what I have in mind is selling sailing boats in Asia. Even though it is an extremely challenging undertaking, I think I could handle it.

4. *Have you ever been to an English-speaking country?*

Last year, I spent one month in Nottingham, where I worked at the Robin Hood Museum as a tour guide in French. So I didn't speak much English during the day, but since I was staying with a host family, I had the opportunity to improve my spoken English and discover interesting aspects of British daily life.

I was not aware for instance that people spent so much time in pubs. I really had a great time pub crawling²⁰ in Nottingham, they have really nice pubs – I remember one in particular, The Pitcher and Piano, which is in a former church.

¹⁶ technique et/ou professionnel

¹⁷ formation

¹⁸ cours (magistral)

¹⁹ *to hold a position / a post*: occuper un poste

²⁰ faire la tournée des pubs

5. *Do you have any other professional experience?*

Apart from that summer job, I work as a volunteer sailing instructor every summer. It enables me to spend a lot of time sailing, and to get to know different kinds of people.

Being the instructor involves a lot of responsibilities, but it is an excellent way of learning teamwork and leadership !

9. Textes d'actualité récente britannique et américaine

9.1. Actualité américaine

9.1.1. The fury of Ferguson

The Economist Nov 29th 2014

1. RIOTS are rarely so widely anticipated. By 8pm on November 24th, when the prosecutor in Ferguson, Missouri, announced the grand jury's decision not to charge a police officer with a crime for shooting an unarmed black teenager, Michael Brown, cops in riot gear were already in place and barriers surrounded municipal buildings. Mr Brown's parents and Barack Obama called for calm. Yet soon America's TV screens were full of burning police cars, crowds coughing on tear gas, and young black men throwing bricks and smashing shops. America's history of racial injustice looked as potent as ever.
2. That would be the wrong conclusion to draw. Looking back at the riots in Los Angeles in 1992 that followed the acquittal of four white police officers who had savagely beaten a black motorist, Rodney King, a lot has changed. America has a black president. The LA riots, which left 53 dead, happened in one of America's great cities, and sparked violence in others. This time the focus was a struggling suburb; in Los Angeles black teenagers protested peacefully alongside white ones.
3. Blacks plainly still suffer prejudice across America: they account for 86% of the vehicle stops made by police in Ferguson. But America's race problem is increasingly one of class. Blacks' biggest problem is now poverty, which is most visible in places such as Ferguson. Like many post-war suburbs across America, Ferguson is stuck between the prosperous white exurbs of St Louis and the city's somewhat revitalised centre. In 1990 its population was three-quarters white; by 2010, it had become two-thirds black. The sub-prime mortgage crisis hit it hard. Many of its homeowners still owe more than they own.
4. Solving the problems of places like Ferguson is less about passing more anti-discrimination laws than about rekindling economic growth and spreading the proceeds. But there are also ways of making politics and policing work better that would contribute greatly to racial harmony in America.
5. Ferguson's political institutions have not kept up with its demography. Of the city's six-member council, five are white. The hapless mayor, James Knowles, is a white Republican who was re-elected in 2013 in an election in which fewer than one in eight eligible voters turned out. He is in charge of the police force, in which three out of 53 officers are black. Such disparities feed the belief—held by blacks across the country—that both justice and law-enforcement systems are racist.
6. Police brutality reinforces that belief. If there was one lesson from the attack on Rodney King, it was that police officers should behave like civilians, not an occupying army. Around 500 people were killed last year by the police—though since nobody counts, nobody really knows.

7. In Ferguson, bad policies help to explain why distrust turns to anger. Take, for example, the way the town is financed. In 2013 a fifth of Ferguson's general revenues—some \$2.6m, in a city of 21,000 people—were derived from fines and asset confiscation. That is equivalent to \$124 a year for every man, woman and child in the city. Paying fines, even for minor traffic offences, can involve queuing for hours. Those who miss court dates can be jailed until they pay, accumulating more fines along the way. Slowly but surely, the justice system has become an elaborate mechanism for criminalising poverty.
8. Smaller cities should stop using their police forces and courts as tax-collectors. Police shootings should be taken much more seriously, and the federal government should stop enabling small police forces to buy military-grade weapons. Proper gun control laws would help: policemen who fear they will be shot are more likely to kill suspects. In their absence, body-mounted cameras might constrain police behaviour.
9. Efforts should also be made to increase voter turnout. Ferguson, like many small cities, holds its municipal elections at odd times in odd-numbered years, when little else is on the ballot. If they coincided with national elections, more people would be paying attention. And attempts to restrict voting—by banning Sunday polls, restricting voting hours and requiring people to produce ID—should be resisted.
10. Such measures will not inspire great speeches. But the fact that the answers to America's racial problems now lie in a more vibrant economy and the nitty gritty of politics and policing is itself a form of progress.

9.1.2. The lessons of Baltimore

The Economist April 28, 2015

1. THE last time Baltimore rioted in the way it did last night was in 1968, after the murder of Martin Luther King. In the neighbourhoods of West Baltimore, where the broken glass and burning cars are being cleared up this morning, the derelict houses and vacant lots are partly a legacy of that riot almost half a century ago. Like then, this latest bout of chaos began as an outpouring of anger, this time against the treatment of Freddie Gray, a 25-year-old who died in mysterious circumstances on April 19th, having apparently suffered injuries while being arrested.
2. Yet the difference between 1968 and today is that Baltimore is no longer a place where blacks are straightforwardly oppressed. Its population is 63% African American. Its mayor, Stephanie Rawlings-Blake, is a black Democrat who won 87% of the vote in 2011. Her police commissioner, Anthony Batts, is black, too, as are most of the city's police. Baltimore, like Washington DC, Philadelphia and Detroit—and completely unlike suburbs such as Ferguson, Missouri—is a centre of black political control. So why is the city's police department so troubled?
3. There are plenty of reasons. Institutions do not change easily, whoever is in charge. The struggle of blacks in America these days is rarely about the malign intentions of individual racists in power, but rather is more about structural problems such as concentrated poverty, broken families and terrible schools.
4. It does not help, either, that Baltimore is one of the most dangerous cities in America. Its murder rate in 2013 was 37 per 100,000—worse than South Africa's. In one week of June of that year, the city saw ten murders and 28 shootings among a population of just 622,000. Baltimore is a city where young black men are occasionally killed by the police—and where most days a young black man is murdered by another young black man.
5. To say that is not to excuse Baltimore's police department, which has a history of extraordinary violence. But it seems relevant in analysing the problem that many African Americans have with the police. Many young black men resent cops who endlessly search them; who stop their cars and fine them; who treat them like criminals, not fellow citizens. But if you visit a police community meeting in a black neighbourhood, as your correspondent did in the south-east of Washington, DC recently, you discover that the middle-aged, middle-class black women who attend have a different problem. They complain that the police are not doing enough to stop violent crime.
6. Historically, the problem with policing for black Americans has not been its presence but its absence, argues Jill Leovy in "Ghettoside". For much of the 20th century, police in America put a lot of effort into protecting white people and their property from black people, but often ignored black-on-black violence. This, Ms Leovy contends, is one of the reasons why black neighbourhoods tend to suffer so much higher violent-crime rates. When criminals are not punished by the law, they run wild. Each act of violence can spark a cycle of retribution. Scores are settled with fists, knives or bullets. "Snitching" comes to be seen as shameful. When the police do try to solve crimes, they find that no one will tell them anything useful.
7. In Baltimore the murder rate has fallen by a fifth since its peak in the 1990s, but the clearance rate for murders is still well under 50%, compared with a national average of

65%. The Baltimore police department has too few officers—3,000 or so—to investigate more than 200 murders a year while also doing everything else that modern police departments have to do. And because they are overwhelmed, they struggle to gain the trust they need to get people to talk to them, and thereby to reduce the number of murders.

8. In 2005 a white mayor, Martin O'Malley (who now seems likely to run for president), introduced "zero tolerance" policing, urging cops to stop and search young men acting suspiciously for guns or drugs. In that year, the city's police made 100,000 arrests, among a population only six times that. Within a few years that policy was abandoned in favour of a more targeted approach—but only after huge damage had been done to relations between the police and black civilians.
9. The only long-term way to reduce violence is to know more about who is perpetrating it. That means creating an environment where people have faith that the law will protect them—something that most Americans take for granted but residents of inner cities do not. The Boston Gun Project showed that by a mix of intelligence and aggressive targeting of people involved in shootings, the murder rate in black inner-city neighbourhoods can be cut substantially. In Britain, projects such as the Trident programme in London, in which specialised officers built up close links with the friends and relatives of suspected criminals, have had a similar effect in reducing black-on-black teenage knife and gun crime.
10. But the trouble with these long-run strategies is that they require time, money and luck to work. Trust cannot be built quickly. And police departments are seldom radical places: things are done the way they always have been. For a lot of politicians, flooding the streets with blue uniforms to collar criminals is easier—it reassures the public that something, anything, is being done.

9.1.3. The Cost of Relativism

The Washington Post March 10, 2015

1. One of America's leading political scientists, Robert Putnam, has just come out with a book called "Our Kids" about the growing chasm between those who live in college-educated America and those who live in high-school-educated America. It's got a definitive collection of data about this divide.
2. Roughly 10 percent of the children born to college grads grow up in single-parent households. Nearly 70 percent of children born to high school grads do. There are a bunch of charts that look like open scissors. In the 1960s or 1970s, college-educated and noncollege-educated families behaved roughly the same. But since then, behavior patterns have ever more sharply diverged. High-school-educated parents dine with their children less than college-educated parents, read to them less, talk to them less, take them to church less, encourage them less and spend less time engaging in developmental activity.
3. Interspersed with these statistics, Putnam and his research team profile some of the representative figures from each social class. The profiles from high-school-educated America are familiar but horrific.
4. David's mother was basically absent. "All her boyfriends have been nuts," he said. "I never really got to see my mom that much." His dad dropped out of school, dated several woman with drug problems and is now in prison. David went to seven different elementary schools. He ended up under house arrest, got a girl pregnant before she left him for a drug addict.
5. Kayla's mom married an abusive man but lost custody of their kids to him when they split. Her dad married a woman with a child but left her after it turned out the child was fathered by her abusive stepfather. Kayla grew up as one of five half-siblings from three relationships until her parents split again and coupled with others.
6. Elijah grew up in a violent neighborhood and saw a girl killed in a drive-by shooting when he was 4. He burned down a lady's house when he was 13. He goes through periods marked by drugs, clubbing and sex but also dreams of being a preacher. "I just love beating up somebody," he told a member of Putnam's team, "and making they nose bleed and just hurting them and just beating them on the ground."
7. The first response to these stats and to these profiles should be intense sympathy. We now have multiple generations of people caught in recurring feedback loops of economic stress and family breakdown, often leading to something approaching an anarchy of the intimate life.
8. But it's increasingly clear that sympathy is not enough. It's not only money and better policy that are missing in these circles; it's norms. The health of society is primarily determined by the habits and virtues of its citizens. In many parts of America there are no minimally agreed upon standards for what it means to be a father. There are no basic codes and rules woven into daily life, which people can absorb unconsciously and follow automatically.
9. Reintroducing norms will require, first, a moral vocabulary. These norms weren't destroyed because of people with bad values. They were destroyed by a plague of

nonjudgmentalism, which refused to assert that one way of behaving was better than another. People got out of the habit of setting standards or understanding how they were set.

10. Next it will require holding people responsible. People born into the most chaotic situations can still be asked the same questions: Are you living for short-term pleasure or long-term good? Are you living for yourself or for your children? Do you have the freedom of self-control or are you in bondage to your desires?
11. Next it will require holding everybody responsible. America is obviously not a country in which the less educated are behaving irresponsibly and the more educated are beacons of virtue. America is a country in which privileged people suffer from their own characteristic forms of self-indulgence: the tendency to self-segregate, the comprehensive failures of leadership in government and industry. Social norms need repair up and down the scale, universally, together and all at once.
12. People sometimes wonder why I've taken this column in a spiritual and moral direction of late. It's in part because we won't have social repair unless we are more morally articulate, unless we have clearer definitions of how we should be behaving at all levels.
13. History is full of examples of moral revival, when social chaos was reversed, when behavior was tightened and norms reasserted. It happened in England in the 1830s and in the U.S. amid economic stress in the 1930s. It happens through organic communal effort, with voices from everywhere saying gently: This we praise. This we don't.
14. Every parent loves his or her children. Everybody struggles. But we need ideals and standards to guide the way.

9.1.4. Technology disrupting the American Dream

Richard Cohen *The Washington Post* Jan 19, 2015

1. In this May 13 2014, file photo, a Google self-driving car goes on a test drive near the Computer History Museum in Mountain View, Calif. California's Department of Motor Vehicles will miss a year-end deadline to adopt new rules for cars of the future because regulators first have to figure out how they'll know whether "driverless" vehicles are safe.
2. Mercedes-Benz wants to develop a driverless car. Google already has one. This is exceedingly bad news for auto body shops, ambulance-chasing lawyers and others. Soon, truck drivers might be replaced by driverless trucks. What then will happen to the nation's 3.5 million truck drivers, not to mention truck stops, of which there are 276 in Texas alone? (You can Google anything.)
3. The conventional answer is retraining. Truck drivers will become something else, maybe teachers or dental hygienists, which is, of course, possible. It's also likely that many of them will sink into the funk that is the loyal companion of unemployment. Family life will shred, and possibly an army of former truck drivers will enlist with others of the digitally ditched and wreak political havoc. Shippers will sing "Happy Days Are Here Again." For truckers it will be, "Brother Can You Spare a Dime?"
4. It's clear by now that the fruits of automation, computerization and outsourcing are being reaped by the top 1 percent — in this case, shipping companies and not drivers. The old bell curve with the middle class bloating comfy in the middle is being replaced by what's called the power curve, in which something called the 80/20 rule applies: 20 percent of the participants in an online venture get 80 percent of the rewards. Think Uber. It's not the drivers who are getting rich. Something new and possibly awful is happening.
5. Many books have been written about this phenomenon, and in 2012, the Aspen Institute convened a meeting on this topic, with the resulting report bearing the jaunty title of "Power-Curve Society: The Future of Innovation, Opportunity and Social Equity in the Emerging Networked Economy." One participant was Kim Taipale, a leading thinker in this field. I quote from the Aspen report on its summary of Taipale's thesis: "The era of bell curve distributions that supported a bulging social middle class is over. . . . Education per se is not going to make up the difference."
6. What will make up the difference? President Obama is giving it a shot by proposing to raise taxes on the very rich and relieve the tax burdens of the middle and lower classes. This makes so much sense that the Republican Party recently rose as one to oppose it, denouncing the proposal, as always, as a nonstarter. The GOP's monomaniacal mantra is always to lower taxes because that supposedly produces jobs (Oh, yeah, where are they?), as well as billionaires. (No problem finding them.) Many of the jobs currently being produced are part-time and low-wage, but even when the pay is good, the jobs are often evanescent — gone in a year or so.
7. For the past several weeks I've been accosting captains of industry and asking how the American economy is going to both raise incomes and retain jobs. One told me that the rich are going to have to carry the not-so-rich — a vast and expensive

welfare program. Another suggested make-work of the sort that FDR tried during the Depression: goodbye self-service gas stations, welcome back attendants and someone to wipe the windshield.

8. Still others insist that all this worrying is about nothing particularly new under the sun. The United States and, indeed, the industrialized world, has weathered this sort of thing before — the assembly line replacing all those cool artisans making carriages, horseless or otherwise. New jobs are just over the horizon. Innovation and education will create them. Just you wait and see. The app, as Google's executive chairman Eric Schmidt pointed out in a recent talk, is only six years old.
9. To my ears, the optimists sound Panglossian. I have watched Uber (which I use) chew up the taxi industry. Office buildings are being erected for a new age of fewer employees. The law library is online, the back office is overseas — and steno exists only in old movies. ("Miss Jones, take a letter . . .") The middle class has flat-lined; unemployment is down but wages aren't up.
10. Much of this is ultimately supposed to be good. The term "disrupter" has become an accolade, like first-responder or something. Yet there could be an awful political and social price to pay, and that, for the moment, is being discussed only in whispers — largely limited to forums like Aspen and not the political arena. The stirring will likely have severe political repercussions. After all, what is being disrupted is not the occasional industry but the American Dream. The disrupters disrupt sleep itself.

9.1.5. Why the gun lobby is winning

The Economist Apr 4th 2015

1. WHEN a young man walked into an elementary school in Newtown, Connecticut in December 2012 and murdered 20 small children and six staff with a Bushmaster rifle from his mother's gun collection, some wondered if a tipping-point had been reached. Surely America would now enact laws to keep lethal weapons out of the wrong hands?
2. No chance. Bids to curb sales of the most powerful guns and largest-capacity magazines failed. Congress even refused to expand the number of gun-buyers checked for histories of crime or severe mental illness—though 90% of Americans support such checks. In March this year federal regulators dropped a bid to ban a type of bullet that can pierce body armour, of the sort that police often wear, after 285 Republican and seven Democratic members of Congress objected.
3. The gun lobby's winning record has done little to make its members less angry. The National Rifle Association (NRA), a deep-pocketed group with 5m members, accuses Barack Obama's administration of a "relentless assault" on the constitutional right of citizens to keep and bear arms. Actual evidence of federal tyranny is a bit meagre—in part because the NRA is so good at whipping Washington politicians into line. No matter. A current "trending" alert from the NRA's Institute for Legislative Action sounds the alarm about a rule tweak for hunters taking guns on overseas trips, who—rather than filling out a form at home—may now have to wait at the airport while a customs officer enters their details into a computer. This, the NRA asserts, raises alarming questions about hunters' information being stored by the feds, and is part of a "pattern of abuse" suggesting that Mr Obama's final years in office may be the "most challenging" in the history of American gun-ownership.
4. Meanwhile children keep getting shot at school, sometimes by other children. In the first two years after Newtown there were at least 95 shootings at American schools and colleges, resulting in 45 deaths, according to a tally by Everytown for Gun Safety, a gun-control campaign. After Newtown a few states moved to curb sales of the deadliest weapons. Since 2012 five states have expanded background checks on gun buyers, closing loopholes left by Congress (a bill proposed on March 26th would make Oregon the sixth). But many more states have relaxed firearms laws.
5. Gun-advocates do not win all their fights in the states, but 2015 still looks like a banner year for them. Republicans enjoyed sweeping wins at the state level in elections last November, allowing the party's representatives to advance cherished goals during the short, intense legislative sessions under way in state capitals. In lots of places, those goals involve more guns.
6. Often, gun-lovers hew to a familiar conservative line: that crime is deterred when upstanding citizens pack heat. Florida is debating a "school safety" bill allowing superintendents to choose staff or volunteers with police or military backgrounds to serve as armed school guards. Iowa is pondering a law that would let children younger than 14 use pistols and revolvers (with adult supervision, legislators hasten to add). Republicans in Arkansas want to allow armed judges in courtrooms. Bills were proposed

this year in 16 states to overturn gun bans on college campuses, and remain under debate in a dozen states.

7. Some argue that arming female students will deter rapists. As Michele Fiore, a Republican assemblywoman in Nevada, said to the *New York Times*: "If these young, hot little girls on campus have a firearm, I wonder how many men will want to assault them?" Others retort that arming potential rapists might be less helpful. William McRaven, the new chancellor of the University of Texas System, declared that concealed handguns would make his 210,000 students less safe. As a former navy Seal, Admiral McRaven is hard to portray as a hand-wringing squish, and "campus carry" may well not pass the Texas legislature. To soothe activists for whom gun rights are a test of conservative purity, Republican leaders seem likely to embrace the once-arcane issue of "open carry", allowing the roughly 825,000 Texans with concealed-handgun licences to carry pistols and revolvers visibly (Texans already carry rifles without restriction).
8. Some would like to go much further. The fieriest arguments of 2015 involve "constitutional carry"—the claim that the constitution's second amendment is the only permit Americans need, allowing citizens to carry a concealed or visible gun without any licence, checks or training. Such laws already exist in Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, Vermont and Wyoming. Legislators in Kansas just approved a version. So did lawmakers in West Virginia and Montana. The governor of West Virginia, a Democrat in his final term, vetoed a bill (though, like several rural states, West Virginia allows open carry without a permit). Montana's governor, a Democrat, vetoed a bill too, though his state allows permit-less guns outside cities. Maine is weighing a constitutional carry bill.
9. The NRA can never declare victory, for then what would be the point of it? After each concession, it demands more. Some day, perhaps, it will ask for something so outrageous that it sparks a backlash. But for now it strikes a chord. For the first time in two decades a new poll by the Pew Research Centre found more Americans supporting gun rights than gun controls. How can this be so, when such a huge majority favour background checks? The answer is that background checks are tools of the state and trust in the state has plunged in the past decade, notably on the right where it blends with loathing for Mr Obama. Wayne LaPierre, the NRA's charismatic frontman, told a conservative crowd in February that when criminals attack, or wives, sisters and daughters face assault through "a kicked-down door", "laws can't protect you...You're on your own." That is the authentic voice of the gun lobby in 2015. Fear smothers rational debate. It is meant to.

9.2. Actualité britannique

9.2.1. Apathetic fallacy - Online voting could transform Britain's electorate

The Economist April 18, 2015

1. ONE-BY-ONE they approach the lectern, explaining why they will cast their votes. "Regardless of whether you do or don't, policies will be implemented," says Princess, an activist, to loud cheers. As politicians from the main parties all make their speeches, the atmosphere in the lecture theatre at Queen Mary University, in east London, is electric. This is what Citizens UK, a network of university bodies, youth groups and religious gatherings, does so well: using existing civil-society organisations to spur young people into political action, and holding invigorating assemblies to meld them together.
2. It is also the exception. At the 2010 election, according to Ipsos MORI, 44% of Britons aged between 18 and 24 voted, compared with 76% of those aged 65 and over (national turnout was 65%). The gap is relatively new: it was half the size in 1970, and has grown significantly only over the past two decades. It is also starker than elsewhere. In the German election in 2013, for example, 64% of first-time voters cast their ballots, compared with 75% for over-70s. Britain's low youth turnout helps to explain why the outgoing, Conservative-led government has protected public spending on older voters (guaranteeing increases in the state pension, for example) while doing little to solve a housing shortage, which affects the young most acutely.
3. for the low turnout. One is that more Britons are going to university and ever-more live in short-term, rented accommodation. Both trends make it harder for authorities to register them. Another is that Britain's first-past-the-post system holds down insurgent parties—like the Green Party—which are popular among young voters but stand no chance of winning more than a handful of seats. This makes voting seem less effective. Perhaps the most convincing explanation is that mainstream parties, with their soporific committee meetings, are ill-attuned to a generation more at home in dynamic organisations like Citizens UK and 38 Degrees, an online campaigning network which claims to have over ten times as many members as the Labour Party.
4. What to do? In the long term, political parties should become looser, more open and more welcoming. But one simple improvement would be online voting; a measure which John Bercow, the speaker of the House of Commons, has said he wants to see by 2020. That would both accommodate the footloose lives of young Britons, but also reflect how they like to do their politics: online and with reference to their social networks. Estonia introduced online voting in parliamentary elections in 2007. What is Britain waiting for?

9.2.2. So people hate maths? Here's my plan to make it work for them

Marcus du Sautoy *The Guardian*, April 2015

1. The Labour party has made a commitment to ensure that every young person studies mathematics up to the age of 18. Of course, the people it will affect don't have the vote – although if it was up to Labour they would: to give 16- and 17-year-olds the right to vote is one of their other promises. But what about all those people who do have the vote? Would they have appreciated the chance to carry on their mathematical education, or were they only too happy to give it up as soon as they could?
2. The majority reaction is probably “let me give it up” – but changing that attitude is partly what this initiative is all about. Certainly not everyone is maths averse. Many employers are crying out for a more mathematically and scientifically literate workforce: 60% of UK companies are not confident they will have employees with the mathematical skills to meet the needs of an increasingly scientific future. As a country we are so short of engineers that we are barely able to fill half the engineering jobs that our technical age demands.
3. You only have to look at those countries that make it compulsory to study maths to 18 – such as Taiwan and South Korea – to realise that it probably has a massive knock-on effect for the economic success of that country. The UK is an outlier when it comes to maths education post-16. Only a fifth of pupils in England currently carry on studying maths at any level after GCSEs – the lowest rate of 24 developed countries in a Nuffield Foundation survey, behind Estonia, France, the United States, Spain, Russia and China.
4. But why should maths be privileged above learning a foreign language or history? Does everyone need to know what a cosine is if the UK is to have a brighter future? Does the success of our economy depend on every citizen feeling confident factorising a quadratic equation? It may come as a surprise to you that I don't think so, but I'm still a big believer in teaching maths to 18. What will be important is making sure that the maths we expose students to is both relevant to their future and the future of our country.
5. Many of the best algorithms contain no numbers or equations at all, but are full of mathematical thinking
6. What many are not aware of is that maths is so much more than the technical cogs that currently form the backbone of the curriculum. It is about pattern searching, extended analytical and logical thinking, problem solving. I am just embarking on making a new programme for the BBC about the beauty of algorithms. Many of the best algorithms contain no numbers or equations at all, but are full of mathematical thinking. And it is those algorithms that are creating efficient approaches to a whole range of business solutions, from the distribution of goods from supermarket warehouses to decisions about flight schedules at Heathrow airport.
7. It is the same algorithmic mathematical thought process that feeds into even the efficient running of small-scale businesses or our public services, from running a restaurant to scheduling staff in a hospital. And it is sensitivity to a mathematical thought process that is going to enable people to construct a rational approach to each challenge – an approach that doesn't require reinventing the wheel each time a new problem crops up.
8. What about those humanities students or creative artists or vocational students who might argue that they will never need more maths? I believe that even these students, if

exposed to the right curriculum, will recognise the benefits of more maths. I am doing an event with the Booker-winning novelist Ben Okri at the Hay festival next month about the connections between mathematical proof and literary narrative. As a novelist, Okri is the first to recognise the importance of a logically consistent narrative to the success of a novel – but also the wonderful benefit that a mathematical sensitivity to pattern and structure can give novelists as they create a narrative arch. From musical composition to carpentry, from street art to journalism, a mathematical mindset potentially gives one an edge.

9. But here will be the challenge for any government keen to implement a post-16 mathematical commitment. For some students, learning more calculus and trigonometry will be just the right tools to equip them to give us the missing 50% of engineers we need. But perhaps, just as English splits into language and literature GCSEs, there is a place for a second maths GCSE course.
10. This would expose students to the big ideas of maths: concepts of infinity, the maths of symmetry, the challenge of prime numbers. It is finding out what maths is really about that might change the national mindset to one that will thank a Labour government for the chance to continue mathematics to 18.

9.2.3. Illegal Immigrant Workers' Wages to be seized under Tory plans

BBC news, May 21st 2015

The police will be given enhanced powers under the government's proposals. Police would be able to seize the wages of illegal workers as proceeds of crime under government plans to be set out in next week's Queen's Speech. PM David Cameron will say on Thursday that it has become "too easy" for migrants not entitled to be in the country to exploit loopholes. At the moment, firms can be fined up to £20,000 for employing illegal workers. Labour said more needed to be done to protect the country's borders, and called for laws to tackle exploitation. The proposal to treat the wages of illegal workers as proceeds of crime forms part of what the prime minister will say is a "tougher but fairer" approach to immigration that will be adopted by the Conservative government. However, the scale of the challenge facing ministers in reducing levels of legal immigration will be highlighted again on Thursday when the latest official figures on net migration are published. Net migration rose to 298,000 in the year to September 2014, well above the levels anticipated by the Conservatives - who set a goal before the 2010 election of reducing numbers to less than 100,000, a target they acknowledge they have failed to meet. Mr Cameron will see first-hand efforts to combat illegal immigration on Thursday when he visits a premises in London shortly after it has been raided by immigration officials. He will say the government is determined to "control and reduce" immigration, saying criminalising illegal workers must go hand-in-hand with other measures to lower demand for migrant labour, such as boosting the skills of UK workers.

The government says depriving illegal migrants of their wages will make it harder for them to remain in the UK. A new criminal offence of illegal working will apply to migrants who have entered the country illegally and also those who came to the country legally but are in breach of their conditions or have overstayed. At the moment, migrants with current leave to remain who are working illegally in breach of their conditions may be prosecuted and are liable, if convicted, to a six months' custodial sentence and-or an unlimited fine. But migrants who entered the UK illegally or have overstayed their leave are not subject to the same sanctions, and the police do not have the same powers of confiscation in all cases. Mr Cameron will say that "making Britain a less attractive place to come and work illegally" is a crucial part of a fair immigration policy - adding that a "strong country is one that controls immigration... not one that pulls up the drawbridge". "The truth is it has been too easy to work illegally and employ illegal workers here," he will say in a speech in London. "So we'll take a radical step - we'll make illegal working a criminal offence in its own right. "That means wages paid to illegal migrants will be seized as proceeds of crime... and businesses will be told when their workers' visas expire... So if you're involved in illegal working - employer or employee - you're breaking the law." However, lawyer Saira Grant, director of the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants, questioned how the new measure would be enforced. "We're talking about people who're illegally here, working cash-in-hand below the radar," she said. "Are the wages going to be seized retrospectively? But more importantly we are talking about very vulnerable people, with very little money as it is, often supporting families." She added that extending the "deport first, appeal later" principle to all non-asylum cases, another measure set to feature in a forthcoming immigration bill, would be extremely detrimental to access to justice".

9.2.4. Queen's Speech 2015 : EU Referendum, Tax Freeze and Right-to-Buy

Adapted from The Guardian, May 27st 2015

An EU referendum by the end of 2017 is among a packed programme of new laws in the first Conservative-only Queen's Speech in nearly two decades.

It also includes more free childcare, an income tax freeze and the right-to-buy for housing association tenants. David Cameron said the 26-bill package was a "programme for working people" that would create full employment and "bring our country together".

The measures were unveiled by the Queen amid the usual pomp and ceremony.

(...)

Many of the proposed new laws were promised by the Conservatives during the general election campaign. But Mr Cameron will be able to press ahead with plans previously blocked by the Liberal Democrats after winning an overall majority on 7 May.

These include an Investigatory Powers Bill to give intelligence agencies new tools to target internet data, dubbed a "snooper's charter" by critics. But the prime minister has delayed plans to scrap the Human Rights Act to avoid a potential confrontation with his own backbenchers. Instead, the government will bring forward proposals for a British Bill of Rights to replace the Human Rights Act, with legislation expected following consultation later in the parliament. Scrapping the act in favour of a British Bill of Rights, which will make the Supreme Court the ultimate court so matters are not decided in Europe, could see Britain withdrawing from the European Convention of Human Rights. There was no mention in the speech of a promised free Commons vote on repealing the fox hunting ban, but environment secretary Liz Truss said the vote would happen by 2020.

The political message is clear - that the government will help "working people" but not those claiming benefits who, in the words of the prime minister, are "sitting at home". The Conservatives' own polling highlighted that this was a powerful message especially in the Midlands and southern marginals seized from, or defended from, Labour. The intention is to try to recreate the coalition, not with the Lib Dems, but with people who don't traditionally back the Conservatives, but whose parents may well have voted for Mrs Thatcher before deserting the party for Tony Blair. The prime minister is even using the language of 'One Nation' - briefly favoured by Ed Miliband.

Mr Cameron's flagship policy of giving 1.3 million housing association tenants in England the right to buy their homes at a discount was in the Queen's Speech. Another key priority for the new government is Chancellor George Osborne's Northern Powerhouse plan, with a bill paving the way for HS2 and another piece of legislation enabling cities to bid for an elected mayor, with more powers over transport, planning, policing and health. The mayor would take over the role of Police and Crime Commissioner for the area. There is also a Trade Unions Bill, imposing a 50% turnout threshold on strike ballots, with a further requirement in essential public services for strikes to be supported by 40% of those entitled to vote.(...)

Mr Cameron described his first legislative programme as the head of a Conservative government as an agenda for "working people," with three million more apprenticeships promised over the next five years and a new law to ensure the minimum wage remains tax free. "There should be a job for everyone who wants one - in other words, full employment,"

said the prime minister in his introduction to the Queen's Speech.
He said that after the British economy was hauled back from the brink of disaster in 2010,
the UK now stands "on the brink of something special". (...)

9.2.5. Amazon Tax Probe will go ahead, EU warns

The Financial Times, May 26st 2015

The European Commission warned on Tuesday that Amazon's decision to report its sales more widely across Europe would have no bearing on a landmark probe into the online retailer's tax arrangements in Luxembourg. This month Amazon overhauled its much-criticised tax structure in the EU, raising expectations that it will now pay more tax in Germany, Spain, Italy and the UK.

The online retailer has met a barrage of political and public criticism over the level of its tax payments and Luxembourg is facing an investigation into whether it allowed Amazon to lower its taxable profit through an illegal sweetheart deal. The commission said this month's changes would not have an immediate impact on its Amazon inquiry, which focuses on past conduct. "These changes going forward do not affect the ongoing EU state aid investigation regarding the possible advantage that Amazon would potentially have received in the past through the tax ruling," said Ricardo Cardoso, EU competition spokesman. The FT reported on Friday that Amazon was changing its structure in the UK and elsewhere in Europe by setting up branches of its main Luxembourg company in the countries where it makes its sales. On Tuesday, the company specified where it was changing its accounting practices.

"As of May 1, Amazon EU Sarl is recording retail sales made to customers through these branches in the UK, Germany, Spain and Italy," the company said. "Previously, these retail sales were recorded in Luxembourg. We are working on opening a branch for France."

Brussels has launched four big probes — into tax deals offered to Apple in Ireland, Starbucks in the Netherlands and Amazon and Fiat in Luxembourg — to determine whether EU governments are illegally cutting preferential deals to multinationals that would help them reduce their tax bill. While all of the countries deny wrongdoing, the cases are widely viewed as a signal of intent to crack down on thousands of tax rulings in Europe. Apple has already warned its investors that it could face a significant — or "material" — financial hit if the commission demands that Dublin recover the funds. Until the start of this month, Amazon's taxable presence in the UK, Spain, Germany and Italy was limited to warehousing and other services provided to other group companies. The bulk of the profits across Europe were earned by Amazon EU Sarl, a Luxembourg-based company, which owned the inventory and processed customers' payments. The decision to set up branches of Amazon EU Sarl in its main European markets will make it easier for tax authorities across Europe to tax profits formerly booked in the Luxembourg operation.

Still, EU officials cautioned that the recording of sales was ultimately less significant than where the profit would ultimately be booked. The commission is examining whether Amazon EU Sarl made too little profit because it made too big a tax-deductible royalty payment to one of its own partnerships. Broadly, the four big EU cases hinge on transfer pricing — whereby companies buy and sell products and services internally across borders to book profit in the lowest tax jurisdictions. The verdicts on these tax dossiers had been expected next month but have been delayed. They are among the most closely watched cases of Margrethe Vestager, the competition commissioner, who has the power to demand that countries claw back a decade's worth of avoided taxes.