

## Rapid Correction of English paper June 2009 (LV1 S/ES)

**NB: This is only a suggested correction. See the 'Annales' or your teacher for the official correction. I shall continue to reflect or comment if necessary.**

You will need to use your original exam paper in order to follow my correction. I have added some notes in brackets to help comprehension.

### COMPREHENSION.

1. - Alex is Victoria's son. (By deduction as he is neither Nancy's nor Philly's son, but is friends with Rufus, Philly's son. They are 'classmates')
  - Algy is Philly Bingham's husband. (line 15)
  - Connor is Nancy Masters' son. (line 3)
  - Hayden is Nancy's husband. (line 24 - 26)
  - Rufus is Philly Bingham's son. (line 3 - 4)
2. They got to know each other at school because they were 'classmates', or in the same class. (lines 3 - 4)
3. The scene is set in England (line 1) in London (line 19). (Canary Wharf where Hayden works in London is also mentioned.) They are in Nancy's house because she has invited Victoria and Philly for coffee.
4. Nancy has been living there for six months. (Line 1 'I arrived in England six months ago') She used to live in Dallas, USA, (Line 51).
5. Nancy's home is spacious, Connor has an 'enormous bedroom' full of high tech gadgets and games. The room where they're sitting has 'acres of mahogany furniture' which is also expensive. Nancy's luxurious, well-furnished home shows she has a high standard of living.
6. a) On line 29 we see that he gets up at five in the morning and leaves for work at six a.m.. On line 30 his wife says that he comes home at about eight p.m., in the evening.  
b) Philly assumed that Hayden came home at six p.m. in the evening because Nancy said a cab came for him 'at six' (line 26). Consequently Philly thought they had the evening together whereas in fact he didn't get home until eight in the evening. (line 30)  
(NB: English speakers often use the twelve hour clock and add A.M. or P.M. to be more precise, so **one o'clock** can be in the morning or in the evening.)
7. She says his health is important to him so she makes sure he eats healthy food, avoids alcohol during the working week and goes running with him at the weekend. (They lead a healthy life.) (line 32)
8. Victoria is a traditional, conservative English woman (line 11) so she probably thinks that Nancy is too obsessive about her husband's food and healthy living. In her opinion she is spoiling her husband's fun, he can't enjoy himself.
9. She doesn't seem to have adopted the English way of life because she still has American habits, cooks American food and prefers to have American facilities (the library) and acquaintances (her doctor).
  - line 7 : 'Nancy Masters served fabulous teas with real chips and American burgers.'
  - line 20: 'I've located the American library'
  - line 20 : 'signed on with an American doctor'
  - line 21 : 'the US school was full so we had to put Connor in the local one'
  - line 46 : (about Victoria's hairdresser) 'Is he American?'
10. a) Ute is Nancy's third au pair girl since arriving in England. Consuela was her former Mexican servant in Dallas, USA. Consuela was much appreciated by Nancy who paid for her papers and employed her for five years. However Nancy doesn't seem satisfied with Ute.  
b) Victoria is interested to know how Ute is managing and seems to sympathise with her difficulties as a foreigner in England. In addition she seems to disapprove of Nancy's treatment of her 'domestics' when she refers to illegal immigrants as 'aliens' (line 53). She

has to explain this American use of the term (line 55) to Philly who is also shocked by it. (line 54 she 'choked on her biscuit').

11. Philly apparently agrees more with Victoria, firstly because they have known each other longer and have English traditions and culture in common, line 11, Victoria is 'an old-fashioned English woman from an old-established English family', and Philly's husband had 'inherited' his father's house and worked for 'London's smartest auctioneers'. Secondly, they both seem surprised by the intense way of life of their American friends - line 31 'Philly was aghast'. 'How does he keep going?'. On line 34 Victoria is critical of their way of life too, 'Wow' ... 'life was a bundle of fun for Hayden Masters'. Finally they seem to agree that Nancy is unreasonable about her home helps on line 58, 'Philly and Victoria exchanged a glance'. They are on the same wave length.

12. 'Desperate Housewives'.

I suggest this title because we can draw a parallel between this excerpt and the popular TV series even though it is strictly American. Here we have three married women from different backgrounds trying to cope with everyday life the best they can. They all have different issues and personalities but they are brought together by the fact that their children go to the same local school, so they must also live quite near to each other. Here they meet for a cup of coffee and talk about their lives just as the housewives in the series do.

*(people who don't know the series are at a disadvantage...)*

### **EXPRESSION**

Subject 1 : a) + b) = 300 words !!!!!!! (I hope you did both questions!)

Two easy questions to talk about. Quality is more important than quantity. It's important to be interesting too.

b) is a more personal question about jobs. A good opportunity to think about careers...

Subject 2 : A more difficult task here. Structure is important. A good plan and arguments to convince the examiner. However I can't see any great difficulties.

### **Final comments.**

No surprises, this is a reasonable paper. Let me have feedback if possible. My pupils have my email address.