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English A: language and literature – Standard level – Paper 1
Anglais A : langue et littérature – Niveau moyen – Épreuve 1
Inglés A: Lengua y Literatura – Nivel Medio – Prueba 1

Monday 10 May 2021 (afternoon)
Lundi 10 mai 2021 (après-midi)
Lunes 10 de mayo de 2021 (tarde)

1 h 15 m

Instructions to candidates

- Do not open this examination paper until instructed to do so.
- Write a guided analysis of text 1 or text 2.
- Use the guiding question or propose an alternative technical or formal aspect of the text to focus your analysis.
- The maximum mark for this examination paper is **[20 marks]**.

Instructions destinées aux candidats

- N'ouvrez pas cette épreuve avant d'y être autorisé(e).
- Rédigez une analyse dirigée du texte 1 ou du texte 2.
- Utilisez la question d'orientation ou proposez une autre manière d'aborder le texte en choisissant un aspect technique ou formel sur lequel concentrer votre analyse.
- Le nombre maximum de points pour cette épreuve d'examen est de **[20 points]**.

Instrucciones para los alumnos

- No abra esta prueba hasta que se lo autoricen.
- Escriba un análisis guiado del texto 1 o del texto 2.
- Utilice la pregunta de orientación o proponga otro aspecto técnico o formal del texto en el que centrar su análisis.
- La puntuación máxima para esta prueba de examen es **[20 puntos]**.

Write a guided analysis of **one** of the following texts.

1.

The following article is taken from the *BuzzFeed News* website, an international news organization for readers looking for something original. It is featured in the “Reader” section, which focuses on culture and criticism.

BuzzFeed News

REPORTING TO YOU

ABOUT US GOT A TIP? SUPPORT US BUZZFEED.COM SECTIONS ▼

To Love Your Sister Is To Grieve Your Twin

It’s impossible to explain what having a twin is like to someone who asks, but I am going to try.



Tomi Obaro



5 **My father prayed** for twins. This is a fact my mother usually recites during birthdays, the impending new year, Thanksgiving, and other increasingly rare moments when mother, father, brother, sister, and I are all in the same room in the same time zone. He prayed for twins and we came.

10 First Dami, short for Oluwadamilola (which means “God has made me rich” in Yoruba), and then 25 minutes later, me, Tomi, Oluwatomilola (“God is my sufficiency”). My father prayed for twins, but the odds were in his favor. The Yoruba have the highest twinning rate in the world.

15 Science cannot account for this strange phenomenon. Apparently it has something to do with the skin of the yams we eat or the high amount of a certain chemical found in the beans the women traditionally soak and cook in palm oil. Whatever the reason, we’re supposed to bring good luck and prosperity to our families.

20 My first conscious memory involves my sister. We’re sitting on potties in our little bathroom in Surrey, England, babbling to each other, trying to capture the tonal resonances of Yoruba and failing. Laughing.

25 We are not identical, but for the first maybe 18 years of our lives, we just say yes when people ask, because we might as well be. We have dark brown eyes that turn to slants when we smile. Milk-white baby teeth that gradually grow apart, widening and widening until we demand braces and then I lose my retainer. My face is longer than hers. I am an inch taller. But our voices are the same timbre. When we talk on the phone, our mother can’t tell us apart. We say things at the same time in the same tone and then we laugh when that happens. We move around a lot, England, Gambia, Ohio, two to three years in each place, and so we are natural companions, drama kids who ham it up for the cameras, play elaborate games of make-believe, singing in school musicals, ask obnoxious questions, enamored of our own cuteness.

30 It’s an overused trope, sure, twin as metaphor. Twins as represented in the popular culture are usually one-dimensional carbon copies of each other, devoid of all individual autonomy, or, if not that, cartoonish opposites, the contradictions emphasized to the extreme. But there’s a subtlety about being a twin, about the myriad similarities and common interests encapsulated in someone who is not you.



“Are you guys going to the same college?” Yes. But not on purpose... It will be the place where the untwinning starts to happen and we won't even realize it.

35 First to go, Dami's hair. After sitting through years of cornrows, extensions, relaxers, and quarterly sessions at the one black hairdresser that is sort of near us, Dami just gives up one day and says, "I'm cutting it permanently." She describes the shocked face of the barber as she tells him, "Shorter, shorter."

I don't cut my hair. I keep it relaxed, and then when laziness takes over, I declare myself a member of the third-wave natural hair movement.

40 The second thing to go, her faith. It had been on the fritz before, in high school. Struggles with the usual questions — women, gay people, pain and suffering. There were shouting matches when she refused to go to church. My mother was worried we'd become atheists in college. But once we get there, I go to a Bible study and I like it. People are kind and thoughtful. Smart. Open. I join a campus ministry and convince Dami to join too, and then one day she flames out in spectacular, extravagant fashion... Suddenly, I'm going to church alone, campus
45 meetings alone, singing on the worship team alone.

Third to go, Dami herself, to France for 10 weeks. I am adamantly against it. I don't tell her this. I feign lack of interest. Oh really? You're afraid you won't get your visa? Oh, Mum and Dad are worried about you going? Oh, they've relented. Oh you're going? OK. Bye.

50 She comes back and things are different. So different that we can't quite understand it. We argue often and virulently. I don't remember what the arguments were about (surely something trivial), but I remember the tone vividly, the jabs, vicious jabs. It was misdirected anger, of course. We were changing and we didn't know how to cope with the change.

55 After graduation, I moved to D.C. for an internship and she stayed in Chicago, until she decided to do an AmeriCorps program that took her across the country to California and I came back to Chicago for a full-time job.

One consequence of moving so much is that you develop a numbing acceptance of change, and thus a tendency to avoid attachment. Growing apart, or becoming — as we now say to people who ask — sisters and not twins, was mostly horrifying, but sometimes it's a relief. It means that my worst fear can't possibly devastate me as much as it once could.

60 Over this past Thanksgiving break, we watched the 2015 documentary *Twinsters*, about a Los Angeles actress who discovers that she has an identical twin sister living in Paris. I was on the verge of crying during the whole movie, but I could not bring myself to actually cry, because Dami was dry-eyed and to admit that I was affected by this documentary would be to admit feeling, emotion, attachment, sentiment. As passionate as both Dami and I are individually and
65 with others, amongst ourselves, we are understated. I think it's because the intensity of our love for each other is overwhelming. Loving someone that much is embarrassing.

We live in the same city now. It is a fortunate accident. Or maybe God ordained it. That's what my mother would say.

70 We are a 'we' again. It's strange but exciting. If someone asks us if we are twins, we say yes at the same time in the same tone and then we laugh. It's nice. My father prayed for twins. And we came.



Tomi Obaro is a senior culture editor for BuzzFeed and is based in New York.

1 Comment

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- How is the narrative structure used to explore ideas about identity?

2.

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References:

1. Obaro, T., 2016. To Love Your Sister Is To Grieve Your Twin. *BuzzFeed News*, 27 March. Available at: <https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/tomiobaro/to-love-your-sister-is-to-grieve-your-twin#.ru9Gr23Jx> [accessed 3 September 2020]. Source adapted.

[Image] Female ere ibeji twin figure pair image https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The_Childrens_Museum_of_Indianapolis_-_Female_ere_ibeji_twin_figure_pair.jpg. By Wendy Kaveney and The Children's Museum of Indianapolis. Under Copyright and Creative Commons licence 3.0 (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/deed.en>).