

PART ONE: Listening Comprehension

[20 pts]

- For questions 1 - 15, complete the sentences using from 1 - 4 words.
- For questions 15 - 20, answer **true (T)** or **false (F)**.
- You will have **three minutes** to read **all** the questions before you hear the interview **twice**.

You will hear part of a radio interview in which a writer makes a "confession".

Gaby Longfellow is best known as a writer of _____ (1) . Perhaps because she spends a lot of time in _____ (2) for research purposes, nobody has ever _____ (3) her formal education. People just presume that she _____ (4).

As a teenager, she was always very easily _____ (5) from her school-work, but most people attributed her A level failures to _____ (6) rather than lack of effort. Gaby never once felt she was _____ (7) her school friends who went on to university. In fact, after leaving school, she probably appeared quite _____ (8) about her capabilities.

Living in London as a young woman provided her with many _____ (9) experiences and her extensive reading helped her to develop an interest in different features of _____ (10). She is now a professional writer and one of the great advantages of her job is that it does not affect her _____ (11). Some of her high-powered friends are not so lucky and Gaby's lifestyle can cause feelings of _____ (12). For example, a lawyer friend often asks her to _____ (13) lives with him for a couple of months!

Gaby regrets that nowadays many graduates begin their working lives in _____ (14) because of the huge _____ (15) they had to borrow to finance their studies.

		T	F
16	As a teenager, Gaby was bored with life.	_____	_____
17	After school, she felt lucky to be living independently in London instead of studying.	_____	_____
18	This woman has got no regrets!	_____	_____
19	She thinks it is a waste of time for young people to go to university.	_____	_____
20	The best motivation for studying at university? Salary prospects after graduation, according to Gaby .	_____	_____

from *Black Boy (American Hunger)*, by Richard Wright

[One hundred years ago, in September 1908, Richard Wright was born on a Mississippi plantation. His autobiographical *Black Boy (American Hunger)*, from which the following excerpt is taken, describes in vivid detail his growing up in a closed, racist society. Richard Wright died in Paris in 1960.]

That morning, Richard had come across a fierce criticism of the writer H. L. Mencken in the local newspaper.

Now, how could I find out about this Mencken? There was a huge library near the riverfront, but I knew that Negroes were not allowed to patronize its shelves any more than they were the parks and playgrounds of the city. I had gone into the library several times to get books for the white men on the job. Which of them would now help me to get books? And how could I read
5 them without causing concern to the white men with whom I worked? I had so far been successful in hiding my thoughts and feelings from them, but I knew that I would create hostility if I went about this business of reading in a clumsy way.

I weighed the personalities of the men on the job. There was Don, a Jew; but I distrusted him. His position was not much better than mine and I knew that he was uneasy and insecure; he had
10 always treated me in an offhand, bantering way that barely concealed his contempt. I was afraid to ask him to help me get books; his frantic desire to demonstrate a racial solidarity with the whites against Negroes might make him betray me.

Then how about the boss? No, he was a Baptist and I had a suspicion that he would not be quite able to comprehend why a black boy would want to read Mencken. There were other white men on the
15 job whose attitudes showed clearly that they were Kluxers¹ or sympathizers, and they were out of the question.

There was only one man whose attitude did not fall into an anti-Negro category, for I had heard the white men refer to him as a "Pope lover." He was an Irish Catholic and was hated by the white
20 Southerners. I knew that he read books, because I had got him volumes from the library several times. Since he, too, was an object of hatred, I felt that he might refuse me but hardly betray me. I hesitated, weighing and balancing the imponderable realities. One morning I paused before the Catholic fellow's desk.

"I want to ask you a favour," I whispered to him.

"What is it?"

25 "I want to read. I can't get books from the library. I wonder if you'd let me use your card?"

He looked at me suspiciously.

"My card is full most of the time," he said.

"I see," I said and waited, posing my question silently.

"You're not trying to get me into trouble, are you, boy?" he asked, staring at me.

30 "Oh, no, sir."

"What book do you want?"

"A book by H. L. Mencken."

"He has written several."

"I didn't know that."

35 "What makes you want to read Mencken?"

"Oh, I just saw his name in the newspaper," I said.

"It's good of you to want to read," he said. "But you ought to read the right things."

I said nothing. Would he want to supervise my reading?

"Let me think," he said. "I'll figure out something."

40 I turned from him and he called me back. He stared at me quizzically.

"Richard, don't mention this to the other white men," he said.

"I understand," I said. I won't say a word."

¹ members of the Ku Klux Klan

A few days later he called me to him.

"I've got a card in my wife's name," he said. "Here's mine."

"Thank you, sir."

"Do you think you can manage it?"

"I'll manage fine," I said.

"If they suspect you, you'll get in trouble," he said

"I'll write the same kind of notes to the library that you wrote when you sent me for books,"

I told him. "I'll sign your name."

He laughed. "Go ahead. Let me see what you get," he said.

That afternoon I addressed myself to forging a note. Now, what were the names of books written by H. L. Mencken? I did not know any of them. I finally wrote what I thought would be a foolproof note: *Dear Madam: Will you please let this nigger boy* – I used the word to make the librarian feel I could not possibly be the author of the note – *have some books by H. L. Mencken?* I forged the white man's name.

I entered the library as I had always done on errands for whites, but I felt that I would somehow slip up and betray myself. I doffed my hat, stood a respectful distance from the desk, looked as unbookish as possible, and waited for all the white patrons to be taken care of. When the desk was clear I still waited. The white librarian looked at me.

"What do you want, boy?"

As though I did not possess the power of speech, I stepped forward and simply handed her the forged note, not parting my lips.

"What books by Mencken does he want?" she asked.

"I don't know, ma'am," I said, avoiding her eyes.

"Who gave you this card?"

"Mr. Falk," I said.

"Where is he?"

"He's at work, at the M_____ Optical Company," I said. "I've been in here for him before."

"I remember," the woman said, "But he never wrote notes like this."

Oh, God, she's suspicious. Perhaps she would not let me have the books? If she had turned her back at that moment, I would have ducked out the door and never gone back. Then I thought of a bold idea.

"You can call him up, ma'am," I said, my heart pounding.

PART TWO: Reading Comprehension

[20 pts]

Answer each of the following questions in about 50 words (5 lines) each. Use your own words!

1. The narrator is afraid of "creating hostility" among his white co-workers. Explain and comment.
2. How does Richard go about deciding *which* of the men at his workplace he might dare ask for help to get books?
3. Trace Mr. Falk's changing feelings from the beginning to the end of his discussion with Richard. (lines 23 – 51)
4. What measures does Richard have to take, both before going to the library and once there, in order to get the books he wants from the white woman librarian? (lines 52 – end)
5. Carry on writing from line 73, inventing what happens next!

- PLEASE USE A SEPARATE SHEET OF PAPER
- PLEASE LEAVE A MARGIN DOWN THE LEFT SIDE OF YOUR PAGE
- IF YOU QUOTE FROM THE TEXT USE QUOTATION MARKS

PART THREE: Translation

[20 pts]

[Albourny, un jeune Africain, réclame le corps de son « frère », mort dans des circonstances mystérieuses sur le chantier où il travaillait. Le corps semble avoir disparu. Horn, le Blanc responsable du chantier – en fait, un village de quelques maisons gardé pas des Noirs armés - tente de le raisonner.]

Please start translating from line 1 of the dialogue.

- 1 **ALBOURNY.** – Moi, j’attends que vous me rendiez mon frère; c’est pour cela que je suis là. Je ne partirai pas avant.
- HORN.** – Mais enfin, expliquez-moi pourquoi vous insistez tant pour le récupérer ? On m’a dit qu’il n’était même pas votre frère... D’ailleurs, il n’est peut-être pas mort. Il se peut qu’il
- 5 se soit enfui. Rappelez-moi son nom.
- ALBOURNY.** – On l’appelait Nouofia; et il avait un nom secret.
- HORN.** – Mais que vous importe son corps ? C’est la première fois que je vois cela ; pourtant, je croyais bien connaître les Africains. La vie ne vaut pas grand-chose chez vous, et la mort non plus. Je veux bien croire que vous soyez particulièrement sensible; mais ce n’est
- 10 pas l’amour, n’est-ce pas, qui vous rend si têtue ?
- ALBOURNY.** – Non, ce n’est pas l’amour.
- HORN.** – Je le savais ! Cela fait longtemps que j’ai remarqué ce manque de sensibilité qui choque beaucoup d’Européens. Moi, je m’en fiche; d’ailleurs les Asiatiques sont pires encore. Mais bon, pourquoi devriez-vous vous fâcher pour une si petite chose ? Je vous ai dit que je
- 15 dédommagerai la famille aussitôt que je le pourrai. Vous feriez mieux d’oublier toute cette affaire.
- ALBOURNY.** – Souvent, les petites gens veulent une petite chose, très simple ; mais cette petite chose, ils la veulent à tout prix; rien ne les empêchera de l’obtenir; et même si on les tuait... ils la voudraient encore.

Inspiré de : Bernard-Marie KOLTES Combat de nègre et de chiens
Les Editions de Minuit, Paris, 1989

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