



Samedi 17 Avril 2021

EPREUVE : ANGLAIS

MP / PC / PSI / PT / TSI

Durée : 2 Heures 30 Minutes

Condition(s) particulière(s)

Calculatrice interdite

Indiquer votre code candidat SCEI sur le QCM et l'insérer dans votre copie d'examen

Concours CPGE EPITA-IPSA-ESME 2021

ANGLAIS

Instructions

This exam is composed of **20 multiple choice questions** and **1 writing task** dealing with two documents. The latter show information and points of view related to art, culture and technology.

Part 1.

- Multiple Choice Questions based on Document 1 only ("Art is how we justify our existence"). Put answers on the ANSWER SHEET provided. (20 pts)

Part 2.

Writing Task: **synthesis** Total word limit: 300

- You will make an OBJECTIVE synthesis of the two documents. They reflect information and opinions relating to art, culture, and technology in today's world. The summary must contain 250 words maximum, with a tolerance of 5% more or less. All words count, including article titles.
- In complete SUBJECTIVE intellectual freedom and with maximum rigor in expression, you will write, as a conclusion, your thoughts about the ideas and arguments exposed in the two documents. Word limit: 50.

Total word limit: 300 words with a margin of 5 %. All words count, including any references to the articles.

Indiquer le nombre de mots que vous avez utilisés.

Origin of documents, both published in *The New York Times*

1. "Art is how we justify our existence," by David Zwirner, 28 May 2020.
2. "Computer Stories: A.I. Is Beginning to Assist Novelists", by David Streitfeld, 13 Nov. 2018.

Warning. In order to ensure that your handwriting is as legible as possible, paper is provided for a rough draft. Use the *livret* for your final version.

Attention. Afin d'assurer que votre écriture soit la plus lisible possible, vous êtes prié de commencer par un brouillon puis rédiger la version finale sur les feuillets fournis.

Document 1

Art Is How We Justify Our Existence

May 28, 2020, by David Zwirner, who is an art dealer.

Vocabulary. The humanities – literature, art, philosophy, etc., as distinguished from the sciences.

1. When I agreed to write this essay, little did I know that when I finally sat down to tackle it all my favorite museums would be closed to the public, along with every library, theater, concert hall and movie house and, of course, the galleries I own. It's a bit like our world faded abruptly and unexpectedly from vivid color to black and white. But it dawned on me that there could hardly be a better moment to reflect upon the importance of art — or, better still, culture itself — than in the face of its almost complete physical absence.

2. This total loss of actual, palpable experiences with art is like a kind of **withdrawal** for me. The experience and appreciation — the need — for culture feels like it's hard-wired into my existence and, I'd like to believe, hard-wired into our species. Art is not something that happens at the periphery of our lives. It's actually the thing that's right there in the center, a veritable engine.

3. It's like my mother once said: "Die Kunst ist unsere Daseinsberechtigung." Art is how we justify our existence.

4. We've been creating art for much longer than recorded history. The earliest surviving visual art, as in the cave paintings of Sulawesi in Indonesia and El Castillo in Spain, date back to roughly 40,000 years ago. I have to assume there's earlier work that we don't yet know about. Our great rivals in the evolutionary race, the Neanderthals, were stronger, bigger and had larger skulls than us, but left behind no sophisticated tools and very little in the way of artifacts. One argument holds that the Neanderthal imagination was limited, and that Homo sapiens' more complex and adventurous way of thinking — our creativity — is what moved us to the forefront among the human species.

5. For me, art is not just sensory stimulation. I believe it's most gratifying as an intellectual pursuit. Great art is, by definition, complex, and it expects work from us when we engage with it. There is this wonderful moment, one that I have missed so much lately, when you stand before a work of art and, suddenly, the work is speaking back to you. Great works carry with them so many messages and meanings. And often those messages survive for centuries. Or — even more mysteriously — they change as the years and decades pass, leaving their power and import somehow undiminished.

6. Velázquez's "Las Meninas" comes to mind, as does the intense pleasure I've experienced every time I've seen it, at different stages of my life, at the Prado museum in Madrid. Thinking about "Las Meninas" today, amid the new reality of a pandemic, reminds me how much I look forward to seeing works of art in their physical spaces again. There is no substitute for the artwork's materiality, which ultimately and invariably relates to our senses, our bodies and our analytical prowess and intellectual curiosity.

7. The appreciation of art is, more often than not, a communal experience. It brings us together — when we go to museums, to openings, to concerts, to movies or to the ballet or theater. And we argue, and sometimes we fight, but we certainly don't wage war over artistic expression. I would contend that art and culture are the most important vehicles by which we come to understand one another. They make us curious about that which is different or unfamiliar, and ultimately allow us to accept it, even embrace it. Isn't it telling that those societies most afraid of "the other" — the Nazis, Stalin's Soviet Union, the Chinese under Mao

— were not able to bring forth any significant cultural artifacts? Yet an abundance of work created in resistance to such ideologies can still dominate our cultural discourse.

8. Lately, a discussion has raged about how art and culture stack up against the hard sciences. More **ominously**, the question is weighing on the colleges and universities of the United States, where the humanities are playing an ever smaller role. That's a dangerous proposition. While the sciences have brought into this world so many wonderful things, they are also implicated when it comes to our most sinister achievements — nuclear warfare, genetic manipulation and the degradation of nature.

9. While art can reach into the darkest places of the human psyche, it does so to help us understand and hopefully transcend. Art lifts us up. In the end, I think its mission is simply to make us better people.

10. The machines have proven to be absolutely amazing during a pandemic, connecting us, informing us and entertaining us, but in the end they are limited. They're born of science and they have no imaginations. We have to imagine for them.

11. Who knows what the future will bring? If we Homo sapiens are challenged again, it will not be by the Neanderthal — nor by any other species — but by the machines we invented ourselves. Winning that battle can't be done without firing up the most important engines we possess — culture and creativity — because reason is born *out of* our cultural experiences. Works of art carry with them the wisdom of the world.

12. This difficult period we have been in recently will pass, and the exchanges I've had with visual artists have given me some of my most hopeful moments. I've reached many in their studios, while they were working. They certainly seemed happy to hear from me, and our conversations have been perfectly polite; still, I couldn't shake the feeling that I was interrupting them. They had more important things to do than talk to me. They were making art.

13. I can't wait to see what they've been working on. I promise I will show it to you as soon as I can.