

**Agrégation interne d'anglais**

**Session 2017**

**Épreuve EPC**

**Exposé de la préparation  
d'un cours**

**EPC**

**330**

Ce sujet comprend 3 documents :

- Document 1 : Langston Hughes, "Passing", *The Ways of White Folks*, 1933
- Document 2 : Langston Hughes, "Negro", *Selected Poems*, 1959
- Document 3 : Film excerpt, *Imitation of Life*, directed by Douglas Sirk, 1959

Compte tenu des caractéristiques de ce dossier et des différentes possibilités d'exploitation qu'il offre, vous indiquerez à quel niveau d'apprentissage vous pourriez le destiner et quels objectifs vous vous fixeriez. Vous présenterez et justifierez votre démarche pour atteindre ces objectifs.

**Document 1** : Langston Hughes, "Passing", *The Ways of White Folks*, 1933, pp. 51-55

Chicago,  
Sunday, Oct. 10.

5 DEAR MA,

I felt like a dog, passing you downtown last night and not speaking to you. You were great, though. Didn't give a sign that you even knew me, let alone I was your son. If I hadn't had the girl with me, Ma, we might have talked. I'm not as scared as I used to be about somebody taking me for colored any more just because I'm seen talking on the street to a Negro. I guess in looks I'm sort of suspect-proof, anyway. You remember what a hard time I used to have in school trying to convince teachers I was really colored. Sometimes, even after they met you, my mother, they wouldn't believe it. They just thought I had a mulatto mammy, I guess. Since I've begun to pass for white, nobody has ever doubted that I am a white man. Where I work, the boss is a Southerner and is always cussing out Negroes in my presence, not dreaming I'm one. It is to laugh!

Funny thing, though, Ma, how some white people certainly don't like colored people, do they? (If they did, then I wouldn't have to be passing to keep my good job.) They go out of their way sometimes to say bad things about colored folks, putting it out that all of us are thieves and liars, or else diseased — consumption and syphilis, and the like. No wonder it's hard for a black man to get a good job with that kind of false propaganda going around. I never knew they made a practice of saying such terrible things about us until I started passing and heard their conversations and lived their life.

But I don't mind being "white", Ma, and it was mighty generous of you to urge me to go ahead and make use of my light skin and good hair. It got me this job, Ma, where I still get \$65 a week in spite of the depression. And I'm in line for promotion to the chief office secretary, if Mr. Weeks goes to Washington. When I look at the colored boy porter who sweeps the office, I think that that's what I might be doing if I wasn't light-skinned enough to get by. No matter how smart that boy'd get to be, they wouldn't hire him for a clerk in the office, not if they knew it. Only for a porter. That's why I sometimes get a kick out of putting something over on the boss, who never dreams he's got a colored secretary.

But, Ma, I felt mighty bad about last night. The first time we'd met in public that way. That's the kind of thing that makes passing hard, having to deny your own family when you see them. Of course, I know you and I both realize it is all for the best, but anyhow it's terrible. I love you, Ma, and hate to do it, even if you say you don't mind.

But what did you think of the girl with me, Ma? She's the kid I'm going to marry. Pretty good looking, isn't she? Nice disposition. The

45 parents are well fixed. Her folks are German-Americans and don't have  
much prejudice about them, either. I took her to see a colored revue last  
week and she thought it was great. She said, "Darkies are so graceful and  
gay." I wonder what she would have said if I'd told her *I* was colored, or  
50 half-colored — that my old man was white, but you weren't? But I guess I  
won't go into that. Since I've made up my mind to live in the white world,  
and have found my place in it (a good place), why think about race any  
more? I'm glad I don't have to, I know that much.

[...]

55 Well, Ma, I will close because I promised to take my weakness to  
the movies this evening. Isn't she sweet to look at, all blonde and blue-  
eyed? We're making plans about our house when we get married. We're  
going to take a little apartment on the North Side, in a good  
neighborhood, out on one of those nice quiet side streets where there are  
trees. I will take a box at the Post Office for your mail. Anyhow, I'm glad  
60 there's nothing to stop letters from crossing the color-line. Even if we  
can't meet often, we can write, can't we, Ma?

With love from your son,  
JACK.

**Document 2** : Langston Hughes, "Negro" (from *Afro-American Fragments* published in *Selected Poems*), 1959

**Negro**

I am a Negro:

Black as the night is black,  
Black like the depths of my Africa.

I've been a slave:

5 Caesar told me to keep his door-steps clean.  
I brushed the boots of Washington.

I've been a worker:

Under my hand the pyramids arose.  
I made mortar for the Woolworth Building.

10 I've been a singer:

All the way from Africa to Georgia  
I carried my sorrow songs.  
I made ragtime.

I've been a victim:

15 The Belgians cut off my hands in the Congo.  
They lynch me still in Mississippi.

I am a Negro:

Black as the night is black,  
Black like the depths of my Africa.

**Document 3** : Film excerpt, *Imitation of Life*, directed by Douglas Sirk, 1959

Document vidéo (1'42") à consulter sur la tablette multimédia fournie.