

CAPES/ CAFEP EXTERNE D'ANGLAIS

SESSION 2011

ÉPREUVE SUR DOSSIER

PREMIÈRE PARTIE

Vous procéderez en anglais à la mise en relation des documents suivants, en vous appuyant sur la consigne ci-dessous :

Comment on the new weapons involved in political campaigning in the USA.

Document A : “Potent tool for 'tea party' political campaigns: the 'attack tweet’” (*The Christian Science Monitor*, September 15, 2010)

Document B (audio) : An extract from an interview that Sarah Palin gave after the Tucson shooting (January 08, 2011), taken from a pre-recorded video distributed through her Facebook page on January 12.

Document C: “Sarah Palin's PAC Puts Gun Sights On Democrats She's Targeting In 2010” (*The Huffington Post*, March 24, 2010).

DOCUMENT A

Potent tool for 'tea party' political campaigns: the 'attack tweet'

Forget foreign wars. Today it's political insurgents who are making news across the US, as upstart "tea party" candidates roll past GOP regulars from New York to Colorado. How are these political newbies, many penny-poor with barely a campaign headquarters to speak of, doing it?

One handy tool is the "attack tweet," say social media experts.

One of the fave weapons of these warriors is that 140-character zinger sent out via Twitter. Everyone knows that social media – Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, etc. – lent a big helping hand to the long-shot candidacy of Barack Obama back in '08, but the 2010 tweet is a far cry from the polite Twitter dispatches of 2008.

Sarah Palin set the tone with her tweets, from name calling progressive opponents "a cackle of rads" to calling the president's agenda "backasswards."

In the Delaware Senate race between GOP Rep. Mike Castle and tea partyer Christine O'Donnell, Ms. O'Donnell's campaign tweets to followers were laced with personal comments, including complaints that she was being picked on because she's a conservative woman, says Republican strategist David Johnson, CEO of Strategic Vision.

"These are very dire appeals that serve to energize a loyal base and help get the word out," says Mr. Johnson.

Such messages are scrappier and more emotional than the kinds sent out in 2008, says David Gudelunas, associate professor of communication at Fairfield University in Connecticut. Those first tweets two years ago were largely "antiseptic," he says, dispensing details of campaign appearances and urging followers to vote.

Not anymore. Today they rally the faithful and allow an interactive relationship between followers and candidates, as tweets become retweets and the messages spread virally. In some ways, that is because the political climate is a lot uglier, says political scientist Matthew Hale of Seton Hall University in South Orange, N.J., but it is also a natural evolution in the platform. "We often think that new technology will only be used for 'good,' yet time and time again people use it for 'bad.' "

This feisty stance is typical of the challenger candidate, says Ronn Torossian, CEO of 5W PR, a New York-based public relations firm. These are candidates, many with little to lose, "who can do things that established political figures can't do and wouldn't dare do," he says. Established politicians feel compelled to craft a carefully controlled message, he notes, whereas the outsider can shoot from the hip.

While the Obama campaign was a master of social media when he ran as a fresh face two years ago, "I have no doubt that Obama the incumbent will be running a much different campaign in 2012 than he ran in 2008," in style and substance, says Mr. Torossian.

While the "tweet rant" can be effective, it hardly contributes to elevating the civic discourse, says Mr. Hale. "It is yet another example of the dummying down of campaigns and elections," he says via e-mail. Twitter doesn't allow for any explanation or discussion of the candidate's policy proposals or ideas, he notes. "It is another example of style beating substance and, while it might help win elections, it is part of a disturbing trend for democracy," he says.

But the mere power to rant is its own virtue, says Jonathan Askin of Brooklyn Law School, who was on Mr. Obama's 2008 campaign tech task force. For the first time in the history of America, he says, anyone who wishes to can speak to the world unfiltered by a large business or political interest.

"Today, for the first time in history really," he says, "a single person can be as powerful as a large media company was a mere decade ago."

From *The Christian Science Monitor*, September 15, 2010

DOCUMENT B

AUDIO: An extract from an interview that Sarah Palin gave after the Tucson shooting, taken from a pre-recorded video distributed through her Facebook page on January 12.

Source: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KhcDh0-_5m4, from 3.40 to 5.45

DOCUMENT C

Sarah Palin's PAC Puts Gun Sights On Democrats She's Targeting In 2010

Sarah Palin is targeting -- yes, with gun sights -- House Democrats facing tough reelection fights who voted for health care reform.

Palin's Facebook page now carries a map featuring 20 gun sights, one for each of the Democrats targeted this year by her political action committee SarahPAC. Three of the gun sights, those where incumbent Democrats have already announced their retirement, are colored red.

SARAH PAC WWW.SARAH PAC.COM

20 House Democrats from districts we carried in 2008 voted for the health care bill... **IT'S TIME TO TAKE A STAND.**

Vic Snyder — AR-2	Earl Pomeroy — ND-AL
Ann Kirkpatrick — AZ-1	Charlie Wilson — OH-6
Harry E. Mitchell — AZ-5	John Bocchieri — OH-16
Gabrielle Giffords — AZ-8	Kathy Dahlkemper — PA-3
John Salazar — CO-3	Christopher Carney — PA-10
Betsy Markey — CO-4	John M. Spratt Jr. — SC-5
Allen Boyd — FL-2	Bart Gordon — TN-6
Suzanne M. Kosmas — FL-24	Tom Perriello — VA-5
Brad Ellsworth — IN-8	Alan B. Mollohan — WV-1
Baron P. Hill — IN-9	Nick J. Rahall II — WV-2

■ Already retiring at the end of their terms. 17 more to go!

Let's take back the 20, together!
JOINMETODAY
Sarah Palin

From *The Huffington Post*, March 24, 2010