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**La leçon se déroule en anglais. Elle est suivie d'un entretien en français.**

**SUBJECT:**

"Intensifiers typically add little or no lexical meaning of their own to the noun phrase of which they form a part. A *perfect gentleman* is perfect, of course, in a sense; but one who is truly a gentleman already has this degree of perfection, and all that the addition of *perfect* accomplishes is to underscore it by repetition. The essential redundancy of the relatively ungrammaticalized intensifiers can be seen by comparing their use with their omission after *such* – there is little or no difference in semantic content:

He is such a bore! = He is such a dreadful bore!

They made such an obeisance = They made such a profound obeisance!

It was such a success! = It was such a profound success!

He gave me such a stare! = He gave me such a fixed stare!"

Dwight Bolinger, *Degree Words*, The Hague: Mouton, 1972, p. 153-4.

Discuss.

Candidates will use relevant excerpts from the following corpus to address the above topic.

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### Excerpt 1

A gentleman may be defined as someone who never inflicts pain unintentionally, and where women are concerned I've always prided myself on being a perfect gent. Apart from Manuela – we really must find time for a word or two about Manuela soon – I've never got any mileage out of hurting women.

Michael Dibdin, *Dirty tricks*, 1991, BNC

### Excerpt 2

She had brought the casket of chocolates down on his head and run away. 'And he seemed such a gentleman!' Ann exclaimed. 'You wouldn't have thought so if you'd heard him shouting after me as I ran away,' Sarah said.

E. Murphy, *A Nest of Singing Birds*, 1993, BNC

### Excerpt 3

Many thanks to everyone who helped to make the 'Fitness for Fun' session at Crystal Palace such a great success. Sponsorship money is still coming in and the total on 11th January stands at £1415.30.

The Medau Society, *Medau Society leaflets*, 1980, BNC

### Excerpt 4

He goes to sleep with the feeling that things are going to go right for him in this town. And enjoys a perfect night's sleep – deep, clear, and refreshing, like gliding down through sunlit water on a hot day; such a perfect night's sleep that he is entirely unconscious of how much he is enjoying it, or of its depth, clarity, and refreshingness, or its resemblance to gliding through sunlit water on a hot day; so perfect that from time to time he half wakes, just enough to become conscious of how unconscious of everything he is.

Michael Frayn, *Sweet Dreams*, 1976, BNC

### Excerpt 5

Even the stars of the show were willing to help the collection of great minds at Exeter University find out why 16 million viewers a day tune in to Neighbours. "The reason why it was such a success was because of the sunshine, the innocence, and opportunities people had," says original cast member Kylie Minogue.

*The Daily Mirror*, 1992, BNC

### Excerpt 6

I want him to know he has my son's blood on his hands. He should never forget that and I hope it haunts him forever. It was such a pointless waste of life. I can never forget him.

*The Daily Mirror*, 1992, BNC

### Excerpt 7

I have always been a little suspicious of dealers. There have been few relationships of that kind in my life. My first real exhibition was at the Hanover Gallery in 1955 and it wasn't a great success commercially; very little was sold so there was an interval of eight years before I had another.

*The Art Newspaper*, 1992, BNC

### Excerpt 8

Even after the fire, Garvey had never looked so wretched. Gabriel's heart went out to the playmaster. Unable to pour out any abuse on such an august gentleman of the realm, Garvey could only bow respectfully and struggle to turn the pageant in the small yard of the mansion.

Geraldine McCaughrean, *A Little Lower than the Angels*, 1987, BNC

### Excerpt 9

The 26 students and three teachers, from Xirivella near Valencia, in eastern Spain, stayed with families in Macclesfield, Congleton, Wilmslow and Poynton for ten days. During their visit they went on excursions to Styal Mill, Chester and Liverpool. This new exchange venture has proved a tremendous success, not only improving linguistic skills and cultural awareness, but also in forming friendships which will last way beyond the second leg of the exchange, due to take place in March.

*Shrewsbury Diocesan Catholic Voice*, 1992, BNC

### Excerpt 10

"You loved King James?" "He had his failings, but he was a great prince. Noble-hearted and generous to a fault." Ruthven looked up at the birds wheeling and twisting against the blue sky. "Such a noble prince," he whispered, "deserved a better end than that."

Michael Clynes, *The White Rose Murder*, 1992, BNC

### Excerpt 11

"I think it's one of the reasons why you're upset, isn't it? That you know you made such an awful fool of yourself."

David Coulby & Tony Booth, *Producing and Reducing Disaffection*, 1987, BNC

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### Excerpt 12

I decided I would carry the six-pound loss myself rather than admit to him I'd made such a fool of myself.

Jeffrey Archer, *As the Crow Flies*, 1991, BNC

### Excerpt 13

"In the multitude of words there wants no transgression; therefore let thy words be few," is but one admonition regularly repeated in scripture and the sayings of the fathers. In poetry it found its perfect fulfilment; already, his vocation was being felt. As he said to us 42 years later, "I was interested in some kind of sense, that I descended from Aaron, that I was some kind of high priest. I was creating my own mythology."

Loranne S. Dorman & Clive L. Rawlins, *Leonard Cohen: Prophet of the Heart*, 1990, BNC

### Excerpt 14

Only through such an accidental, miraculous chance could anyone expect to shake off the yoke of grimly limited prospects.

Melvyn Bragg, *The Life of Richard Burton*, 1989

### Excerpt 15

Also, if a person chooses not to smoke why should he be subjected to such a poisonous, foul and unpleasant cocktail of several thousand gases in the form of tobacco smoke?

*Northern Echo: News and Features*, 1992, BNC

### Excerpt 16

"Paul's death has been such an appalling shock; I don't think my mind is working properly yet."

P. D. James, *A Taste for Death*, 1989, BNC

### Excerpt 17

But a number are outside the borough boundaries and some are as far afield as Northallerton, Thirsk and Wolsingham 26 miles away from Darlington town centre. The booklet was criticised during its draft stages for including details of accommodation such a long distance away.

*Northern Echo: News and Features*, 1992, BNC

### Excerpt 18

They are quite happy to question you, though, and are not averse to having a look through your personal items when your back is turned. Delve into their affairs, however, and you are likely to be met with that fixed stare – all Scorpios have piercing eyes – which says mind your own business.

*She Magazine*, 1989, BNC

### Excerpt 19

She preferred the open spaces to the concrete sidewalks of the city, even while she admitted that it was nice living in so central a location that you could walk to the corner store or a little café if the mood struck you.

Karin Slaughter, *Undone*, 2009

### Excerpt 20

Wind sighed above them, and morning sun dappled the ground. It did not look so terrible a place, not to left nor right nor straight ahead.

C. J. Cherryh, *The Goblin Mirror*, 1992

### Excerpt 21

He was a young man, not two-and-twenty, and he had a profound, nearly religious reverence for those who had fought in the war. Living, as he did, in such a place as Helltown, and moving through indifferent social circles, he had never heard how my military career had met its conclusion, and I saw no advantage in sharing information that would lead to his disillusionment.

David Liss, *The Whiskey Rebels*, 2008

### Excerpt 22

The place I'd ended up didn't look anything like the alleged probe pictures the government spread around to prove the planet was such a hellish place only monsters could live there.

"Bug Trap", *Analog Science Fiction & Fact*, Jul/Aug 2010