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

**SUBJECT:**

"When these items [minimizers] occur in positive contexts (if they do), they denote a minimal quantity, when they occur in negative contexts, the negation denotes the absence of a minimal quantity, and hence the presence of no quantity at all."

Laurence R. Horn, *A Natural History of Negation*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989, p. 400.

Discuss.

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

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### Excerpt 1

For instance, the morning after one night when he'd stayed until about 5, so I'd had very little sleep, I walked around, phased out really, feeling a little bit of an invalid.

Jenny Joseph, *Persephone*, 1986

### Excerpt 2

"Sandwiches! Coffee! Or do you prefer whisky-and-soda, madam? We have both," said this extraordinary old man, looking at a hamper on the seat beside him. "No thank you, I'd rather have coffee – at least, I don't want anything – I'm not a bit hungry..." "Yes, you are. Open the hamper, Chignell. There, a conglomeration of indigestible rubbish! Take your choice, young lady." "But I'm not at all hungry, really," said Breeze, who couldn't have swallowed a mouthful at that moment.

Mary Gervaise, *The Distance Enchanted*, 1983

### Excerpt 3

Jim Baker, hardly a modest man, hardly not a self important man, seemed to feel that he could get on an occasional normal jet, fly first class and be at no threat.

CNN, *Crossfire*, 1991, COCA

### Excerpt 4

Her femininity was expressed in the slightest tilt of her dark head or the most inconsiderable movement of her shiny boots beneath the table.

Dennis Potter, *Hide and Seek*, 1990

### Excerpt 5

Anne wondered later if the Mormon had marked John as a potential convert and torn his coat on purpose, because as John stitched, the men devoured her scones and talked about their religion. When they left, they invited John to attend a service. "Not likely," Anne retorted as she collected the plates, on which not so much as a crumb was left.

Sandra Dallas, *True Sisters*, 2012

### Excerpt 6

There was a story about an oil tanker that had veered off course and steamed right through Heaven Sound. That was the last anyone heard of it. Helicopters were sent out, teams of divers too, but the water yielded nothing, not a single body, not a trace of oil.

Rupert Thomson, *The Five Gates of Hell*, 1991

### Excerpt 7

Now it was neatly repaired, the covers pasted on, the pages mended, and the pictures replaced firmly in the places where they belonged. Evidently he had spent not a little time in restoring the poor old book to something like a presentable condition.

Augusta Huiell Seaman, *The Adventure of the Seven Keyholes*, 2001

### Excerpt 8

The door to the Science section slid open as he walked in. The mood here was one of quiet business. They had lost a heartbreaking amount of data, but what they had still filled banks of qubit memory files. There was not a little element of tension in here.

Candy Sanford Lowe, *Vertex*, 2007

### Excerpt 9

"Headache?" he said without a trace of sympathy.

Liza Goodman, *Gemini Girl*, 1992

### Excerpt 10

I was so upset and shocked when I came to the hospital and you were gone I could of died. I did not sleep a wink last night for worrying about you and if you are alright.

Jane Rogers, *Her Living Image*, 1990

### Excerpt 11

"Boy, are you hurt?" I was breathing so hard that all I could say was, "Don't!" When he stepped over the curb I'd fallen on, his eyes went all empty. He stopped looking at me and started walking south. I felt a nudging on my foot. The edge of the wall was moving forward. It was slow, just a creeping up that you could hardly notice, but it was growing.

Marcos Donnelly, *El Hijo de Hernez*, 1995

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**Excerpt 12**

Every golfer in the world experiences that awful feeling of helplessness when he stands over a putt and knows that he has not the slightest chance of getting the ball near the hole, let alone into it.

Malcom Hamer, *Sudden Death*, 1991

**Excerpt 13**

"Thank you for your concern, but I don't feel awkward in the slightest. I feel, as it so happens, perfectly comfortable."

Stephanie Richmond, *Miracles Can Happen*, 1992

**Excerpt 14**

"Would you like a fruit-gum?" "A fruit-gum? Oh, I see! Thank you, no – I mean, yes, please. I should like one – h'm – very much." "I thought you might be a bit hungry," said Jill delicately, holding out the packet. The tramp choked a little, as if the gum he accepted and popped into his mouth had gone the wrong way.

Robert Moss, *The Challenge Book of Brownie Stories*, 1988

**Excerpt 15**

What's the matter with you? Why are you sitting around complaining – when all you have to do is get up, introduce yourselves, and start something new? I know we all get a bit stuck in our ways once we're over thirty, but for Heaven's sake, isn't it worth a try?

Charles Jennings, *Now We Are Thirty-Something*, 1991

**Excerpt 16**

It's not little known because I've said it so many times – that one of my favorite things to do in life is to remove stains.

Ind\_Oprah, 01/08/2003, COCA

**Excerpt 17**

He made himself a cup of coffee and then, feeling deflated and not a little depressed, went to bed.

Helen Forrester, *The Latchkey Kid*, 1990

**Excerpt 18**

"What are we eating tonight?" he asked. It was the best he could do at short notice. "Are you hungry? I'm starving."

Stelle Sheperd, *Black Justice*, 1988

**Excerpt 19**

"Please don't be angry," said Breeze. "I'm not in the least angry!" said the infuriated young man. "Oh, no, I forgot," said Breeze soothingly. "People never are angry; they're always hurt, or surprised, or – when they're simply boiling with rage – 'merely amused'."

Mary Gervaise, *The Distance Enchanted*, 1993

**Excerpt 20**

Alexandra took her father over every inch of her domain and he nodded at her enthusiasm, but if he was at all impressed by what she did, what she planned, he gave no sign.

Caroline Harvey, *Legacy of Love*, 1992

**Excerpt 21**

"I'm not at all impressed, Maggie," he rasped, filled with unusual rage. "I've got eyes in my head and you're not at all daunting any more."

Patricia Wilson, *Dark Sunlight*, 1993

**Excerpt 22**

"See, he's using Morse code," I said, half joking and half not. Ophelia rolled her eyes. "Right. How would a dog learn Morse code?"

Bobbie Pyron, *Squeak Twice for Yes*, 2011

**Excerpt 23**

"Oh, God. You want me to go to the museum and mock the Holocaust. You want to end my career." He's not even half joking now; maybe he's not joking at all. He has seen careers wither, fade, and die.

Marcos Donnelly, *El Hijo de Hernez*, 1995