

EXAMEN DE FIN D'ÉTUDES SECONDAIRES – Sessions 2024**QUESTIONNAIRE**

<i>Date :</i>	23.05.24	<i>Horaire :</i>	14:15 - 16:45	<i>Durée :</i>	150 minutes
<i>Discipline :</i>	Anglais	<i>Type :</i>	écrit	<i>Section(s) :</i>	CB / CB-4LANG / CC / CC-4LANG / CD / CD-4LANG / CE / CE-4LANG / CE-MATF / CF / CG / CG-4LANG / CG-COMED / CG-SPO / CG-URBS / CI
				<i>Numéro du candidat :</i>	

Task 1: Reading comprehension (10 marks)**Stanley cups took the world by storm. Then the backlash began.**

On New Year's Eve, Meagan Howard waited outside a supermarket to buy this season's most **coveted** accessory: a shiny pink travel tumbler called the Starbucks x Stanley Quencher. When the doors opened, Howard took off like a race horse leaving the starting gate, running as fast as possible. Then the 33-year-old slipped, ultimately face-planting on the cold tile floor.

5 The cup she got was a limited-edition version of a 40oz stainless steel, vacuum-insulated jug with a straw made by Stanley, the 110-year-old brand usually associated with outdoor enthusiasts. Although they're sold out now, Starbucks x Stanley mania lives on in TikTok videos, showing grown adults **stampeding** towards shop displays across the country. **_(A)_**

10 The thirst for Stanleys really took off in early 2022, when the product was profiled in the *New York Times*. Influencers on #WaterTok, a corner of TikTok where people with very plump-looking skin take hydration seriously, praised the cup as a holy grail, listing out its **purported** virtues: it fits in a car's cup holder and has a straw for easy drinking, and a handle too. From there it caught on with the people most likely to succumb to targeted ads or influencer endorsements. The *New York Times* called Stanley fans a "sisterhood", reversing decades of macho branding.

15 On social media, users show off their collections, **flaunting** cupboards filled with cups in every hue. Many have also bought accessories to personalize their Stanleys. The Stanley Quencher has been called an "adult sippy cup", an emotional-support item that comes in 26 colours, so it makes sense that its evangelists would fall victim to infantilisation. What adult needs a straw to avoid spilling all over themselves? **_(B)_** Just how "eco-friendly" can it be when people are collecting a Stanley Quencher to match every outfit?

20 As the anti-plastic pollution movement picked up steam, reusable water bottles became the new stars. A 2020 study found that 60% of US adults use reusable water bottles, a decision that's generally regarded as environmentally responsible. "It" cups emerged, hawked by celebrities and influencers who wanted to at least appear eco-friendly.

25 Gendering water seems ridiculous – and yet, most of the reusable bottle companies heavily market to women. According to psychology professor Daniel Benkendorf, women are the target demographic for "sustainable" products because "these concepts have been feminized in our culture". Benkendorf added that "young people, especially young women, are more likely than ever to say that a brand's ethics matter to them. **_(C)_**"

30 Stanley wasn't always a hit among women. Technically, the Stanley story started in 1913, when William Stanley Jr made the first vacuum-insulated steel bottle. Mid-century ads

35 promised that “IT WON'T BREAK!” and fashioned the product as a worksite essential. The reputation stuck, and Stanley (the brand) marketed its products mostly to men for about a hundred years or so.

40 But for our purposes, Stanley came on to the scene around 2020. The Buy Guide, a review site that rates products in order to help followers make “purchases that make life a little better”, had been promoting the tumbler to its readers for years. Stanley took note of this boost and tapped the Buy Guide’s founders to lead its social media outreach.

45 Despite the name (and function), buying a reusable water bottle isn’t always about staying hydrated. **_(D)_** But owning a water bottle means becoming part of a community, led by the influencers who peddle it as a lifestyle essential on social media. “When we carry items every day, it becomes part of our story, our identity, with colours that represent who we are,” Ashlee LeSueur, a Buy Guide founder, said.

Or maybe who we want to be. Lakyn Carlton, a “sustainable” stylist, says the cup’s reputation signals a certain kind of status. “It costs \$45, which is expensive, and it comes in all these colours,” she said. “It’s about channelling that attitude: I can drive around all day with my different coloured cups to match every outfit.”

50 Sure, scenes of women racing each other down supermarket aisles to get their Stanleys represent the uglier side of late-stage capitalism: our unquenchable desire for more makes villains out of all of us. **_(E)_**

55 According to the author J.B. MacKinnon specialised in capitalism, it’s a predictable cycle: first, a buzzy, supposedly green product comes out, with the added benefit that using it makes you a “Good Person Who Cares About the World”. Demand rises, production ramps up, and people over-consume the item.

60 The same thing happened with tote bags. First, the utility items were for carting groceries home, a necessity intended to combat plastic waste. Then came the status tote, **emblazoned** with a brand name, intended to show off to the world. Collections built up, and people ended up with closets full of tote bags – more over-produced junk they never use.

65 “We’re not achieving anything with these products and are often going backwards,” MacKinnon said. “Everyone was supposed to buy one reusable water bottle 15 years ago and carry it to the grave. But now there’s a constant shift and look in the style of these bottles, and people enter into a constant replacement cycle. I’d be surprised if at this point reusable water bottles are accomplishing much.”

Source:

<https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2024/jan/12/stanley-cups-tumblers-water-bottle-trend> by Alaina Demopoulos– *The Guardian*, 12.01.2024 (874 words, edited)

READING COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

A) Insert sentences into the text (-1 per wrong or missing answer)

Choose which sentences (1-7) best fit into the gaps (A-E) in the text. Write the correct numbers into the box below. There are two sentences which you do not need to use.

1. The single most redeeming quality of a Stanley – the fact that it is reusable – is also being debated.
2. This isn't a new phenomenon.
3. Indeed, on TikTok you'll find women pouring soda into theirs.
4. The company is aiming for a circular eco-friendly future.
5. How did a \$45 water jug spark such chaos?
6. The durability of the Stanley cup remains unmatched.
7. They will only buy from companies whose values align with their own.

Write your answers here:

Gap in text:	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
Sentence:					

B) Vocabulary (-1 per wrong or missing answer)

Match the expressions from the article with the definition/synonym that is closest to their meaning in the text. Circle the best option - a, b or c. There is only ONE correct answer per example.

1. In line 2, "coveted" is closest in meaning to:
 - a) sought-after
 - b) discrete
 - c) observable

2. In line 8, “stampeding” is closest in meaning to:
- a) leaving a trace
 - b) queuing up
 - c) rushing
3. In line 12, “purported” is closest in meaning to:
- a) of a certain colour
 - b) supposed
 - c) unnecessary
4. In line 17, “flaunting” is closest in meaning to:
- a) parading
 - b) criticising
 - c) hoarding
5. In line 58, “emblazoned” is closest in meaning to:
- a) fire-resistant
 - b) made of a certain fabric
 - c) inscribed, ornamented

C) True, false or not stated? (-1 per wrong or missing answer)

Decide if the statements are *True* (T), *False* (F) or *Not Stated* (NS) in the text. For each statement, circle T, F, or NS.

1) To some, collectors of Stanley cups are seen as childish.	T	F	NS
2) There is now an underground market for special edition Stanley cups.	T	F	NS
3) Celebrities are partially to blame for today’s popularity of Stanley cups.	T	F	NS
4) Stanley products were initially promoted to women.	T	F	NS
5) One expert praises the sustainability that Stanley cups offer.	T	F	NS

Task 2: Reading into writing (20 marks)

You are going to read two texts in which the authors give their views on AI-generated models.

Text 1: Computer-generated inclusivity: fashion turns to 'diverse' AI models
by Alaina Demopoulos

The star of Levi's new campaign looks like any other model. Her tousled hair hangs over her shoulders as she gazes into the camera with that far-off high-fashion stare. But look closer, and something starts to seem a little off. The shadow between her chin and neck looks muddled, like a bad attempt at using FaceTune's eraser effect to hide a double chin. Her French-manicured fingernails appear scrubbed clean and uniform in a creepy real doll kind of way.

The model is AI-generated, a digital rendering of a human being that will start appearing on Levi's e-commerce website later this year. The brand teamed with LaLaLand.ai, a digital studio that makes customized AI models for fashion companies, to dream up this avatar.

Amy Gershkoff Bolles, Levi's global head of digital and emerging technology strategy, announced the model's debut at a Business of Fashion event in March. AI models will not completely replace the humans, she said, but will serve as a "supplement" intended to aid in the brand's representation of various sizes, skin tones and ages.

"When we say supplement, we mean the AI-generated models can be used in conjunction with human models to potentially expand the number of models per product," a Levi's spokesperson said. "We are excited about a world where consumers can see more models on our site, potentially reflecting any combination of body type, age, size, race and ethnicity, enabling us to create a more personal and inclusive shopping experience."

Michael Musandu, the founder of LaLaLand.ai, created the software in part because he struggled to find models who look like him. He was born in Zimbabwe, raised in South Africa, and moved to the Netherlands to study computer science. "Any good technologist, instead of complaining about a problem, will build a future where you could actually have this representation," Musandu said.

What about simply hiring a diverse cast of models? Musandu said that LaLaLand.ai is not meant to "replace" models, but allow brands to afford showing off different clothes on as many bodies as possible.

"It is not feasible for brands to shoot nine models for every single product they sell, because they're not just hiring models, they're hiring photographers, hair stylists and makeup artists for those models." AI-generated images don't need glam squads, so brands can cut costs they would spend on set by using fake avatars. There are already "digital influencers" like Lil Miquela and Shudu, fake avatars with millions of followers on social media. They model Prada, Dior and Gucci clothing with the idea that their (human) audience will purchase the pieces. Unlike their mortal counterparts, these models also never age. Miquela, a "19-year-old Robot living in LA", is forever 19 – making her a hot commodity in a youth-obsessed industry.

Source: <https://www.theguardian.com/fashion/2023/apr/03/ai-virtual-models-fashion-brands>
by Alaina Demopoulos – *The Guardian* (03.04.2023) (465 words, edited)

Text 2: AI models are here. Can they actually improve fashion representation?

by Maliha Shoaib

Brands experimenting with AI are finding ways to represent people from marginalised groups in digital form — with mixed responses from consumers and industry insiders.

When Levi's announced plans to experiment with AI-generated models to increase diversity, it received swift backlash. Creating an avatar of a person of colour — rather than hiring a real person — seemed like a way to profit from the appearance of diversity without having to invest in it.

Part of the backlash stemmed from the discomfort surrounding the use of AI to replace humans. Brands and AI companies need to tread carefully, even when the intention of diverse AI model representation is supposedly to allow customers to see what they look like in clothing. The use of AI models raises questions around who is profiting, what representation is actually "real" versus manufactured and the intention of those powering the technology.

The problem, historically, has been when such projects are associated with diversity. Digital representation has often been criticised as a form of appropriation: controversy has surrounded dark-skinned digital model Shudu Gram because she was created by a white man, and questions around true representation of women of colour have surrounded digital influencer Lil Miquela, who is designed to be mixed race Brazilian-Spanish.

For now, human models are still needed as a reference to create accurate photorealistic AI images. "I think you'll see companies leaning towards the side of more of a *digital twin*, where a model can be digitised and they can update that imagery and be paid every time," says Brian Harris of Vue.ai.

British model agency On|Off hosted a "phygital" fashion show during London Fashion Week which featured physical models alongside avatar counterparts wearing digital twins of the garments. The physical models were mostly gender non-conforming models, yet the avatar versions of the models were gendered. "When we did the digital fashion show with the avatars next to the real life models, I realised the models were probably more diverse than their avatar equivalents," says agency founder Lee Laphorne. "I don't feel that the AI programmes have evolved so much to have proper representation of individuality. We were limited by the mechanics of the avatar framework."

Moreover, some experts caution the true cost of free open generative AI tools: the image databases are scraped from all over the internet so the data is not given voluntarily. "Legislation and guidelines around AI must evolve as quickly as the technology to remain equitable," says Dale Noelle, founder of True Model Management. New rules and laws need to be created to prevent AI from stealing models' (or generally speaking people's) features and appearance.

Who is profiting? The biggest red flag, experts say, is when brands are actively avoiding paying people from underrepresented groups, whether that's models, photographers, developers or even people whose likeness has been used to develop a certain dataset.

Source:

<https://www.voguebusiness.com/technology/ai-models-are-here-can-they-actually-improve-fashion-representation> by Maliha Shoaib – *Vogue*, 25.04.2023 (483 words, edited)

Writing task

Write a structured **analysis of 200-250 words** in which you do the following:

- Compare and contrast the overall points of view expressed in the two texts (referring to 2-3 main arguments put forward in each text).
Your **analysis** must represent **± 2/3 of your answer**, i.e. **± 140-170 words**.
- Explain which point of view you agree with more, and why. If you agree with both or neither, explain why.
Your **personal opinion** must represent **± 1/3 of your answer**, i.e. **60-80 words**.

Use your **own words** as much as possible. Do not copy from the texts, except for short quotes (with quotation marks) to support your statements.

Indicate your total **word count**.

Task 3: Essay writing (30 marks)

Write a well-structured essay of between 300 and 400 words on ONE of the topics below. Indicate your choice of topic clearly and include the word count.

1. Will self-driving cars make our roads safer in the future?
2. The fast fashion industry is rapidly growing in popularity despite its disastrous consequences. What can be done to tackle the issue of fast fashion?
3. Food analysts believe that insect-based food might be able to compete with meat products and vegan / plant-based food. To what extent do you agree?