

# PREMIERE International (St Denis International Class of 2019)

The Premiere international section prepares students for the Cambridge «AS Level Literature» English exam. Due to the challenging material studied at this level, this course will take place over two years, and students will take their AS Level exam at the end of their year in Terminale.

*Ce cours est organisé exactement comme un cours d'anglais dans un pays anglophone. Les élèves de cette section seront traités comme s'ils étaient des élèves anglophones : ils seront en immersion totale dans la langue anglaise, écrite et parlée. Nous ne travaillerons pas la grammaire ; les élèves sont censés travailler leur anglais spontanément en lisant, en écrivant, etc. Nous avons conscience qu'un temps d'adaptation, parfois difficile, sera nécessaire aux élèves pour s'habituer à ces exigences, mais les résultats en valent la peine.*

*Les élèves de cette section doivent être motivés. Ils doivent être prêts à travailler dur, et apprécier lire, écrire, et parler en anglais. Ils auront un examen sur Small Island à la rentrée pour évaluer si l'élève a bien lu le livre, et après on va travailler le livre ensemble en cours pendant quatre semaines. Les élèves avec des résultats trop faibles risquent de ne pas rester en section international.*

*L'année prochaine, l'examen Cambridge évaluera les capacités des élèves à lire de la poésie, des pièces de théâtre et des textes de prose en anglais, ainsi qu'à rédiger des analyses littéraires en anglais sur ces œuvres. L'examen Cambridge évaluera les élèves comme s'ils étaient des locuteurs anglophones natifs.*

---

This course is run exactly like an English course in an « anglophone » country. Students in this section will be treated as if they are anglophone students, meaning that they will be fully immersed in spoken and written English. While we realise it will take students some (perhaps difficult) adjustment time to get used to such high expectations, the results are worth it.

Students in this section must be **motivated**. They must be willing to **work hard**, and they must **enjoy** reading, writing, and speaking in English.

This year's exam will evaluate the student's ability to read poetry, plays, and prose in English and to write literary analysis responding to these works in English. At the end of the year on the Cambridge exam, students will be evaluated as if they were native English speakers.

THIS SUMMER, the Premiere **students must:**

- Buy and Read the book Small Island by Andrea Levy  
I recommend the Tinder Press edition found on amazon.fr:  
[https://www.amazon.fr/Small-Island-Andrea-Levy/dp/075530750X/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1496144072&sr=8-1&keywords=small+island](https://www.amazon.fr/Small-Island-Andrea-Levy/dp/075530750X/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1496144072&sr=8-1&keywords=small+island)
- Answer the reading response questions for the book
- Review grammar and spelling with the resources provided
- You can go to the International Section Blog throughout the summer for updates!  
<http://internationalsection.edublogs.org/>
- OPTIONAL: Read a second book of their own choosing from the « Suggested Additional Reading » and complete an interview on their reading of the book for extra credit (5 extra points on the first DS)

When students return to school in September, they **will be tested** on their summer reading, on their ability to write about the summer reading, and their grammar. Students with insufficient marks will not be permitted to enter the International Section. We suggest, therefore, that students take their summer work seriously.

**OBLIGATORY READING:**

Small Island by Andrea Levy

**SUGGESTED ADDITIONAL READING:**

The Scarlet Letter by Nathaniel Hawthorne

The Color Purple by Alice Walker

The Things They Carried by Tim O'Brien

Their Eyes Were Watching God by Zora Neale Hurston

Into the Wild by Jon Krakauer

On the Road by Jack Kerouac

Water for Elephants by Sara Gruen

My Antonia by Willa Cather

Catch 22 by Joseph Heller

Cat's Cradle by Kurt Vonnegut

To Kill A Mockingbird by Harper Lee

I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings by Maya Angelou

The Perks of Being a Wallflower by Stephen Chbosky

(Before selecting a book, use the internet to look up what each book is about to find one that interests you!)

**TIPS FOR READING:**

- If you can, buy a copy of the book and WRITE IN IT. I know this sounds scary, but it's good for you. Come up with your own notation system. For example: circle words you don't know, underline quotations that you like, « star » important passages, put « question marks » next to passages you don't understand. Use different colors. INTERACTING with

- your book will help you to understand it.
- Do NOT look up every single word you do not know in the dictionary. You will become too overwhelmed. Read first for basic understanding, and mark down (underline, mark the page) the words you don't know. Try to guess the meanings of the words based on the context, and if you can't MOVE ON. When you have finished a chapter, go back and look up a few of the words you marked (not ALL of them!).
  - DO NOT watch a movie version of the book. I repeat, DO NOT. If you are having trouble understanding, look up a summary of the book to give you an idea of what you are looking at, but do not rely on the internet/films to understand. If YOU do not do the work to understand, there is no way you will improve your English.

### GRAMMAR PRACTICE:

Download Grammar Book (with explanations and worksheets):

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B092tMTNXyTkTXRYamZwa0NMVm8/view?usp=sharing>

Grammar computer games: <http://www.eslgamesplus.com/>

## READING DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

**After** reading the book, respond to each of the following six questions (answer with minimum 7 lines for each) on a separate paper.

1. *Small Island* is a novel about some big themes found in current literature – for example, racism, intolerance, and bigotry. Levy’s perspective comes from the stories of individual people and their history. She is interested in cultural conflicts from the points of view of all who are affected.  
Into what category would you place Levy’s novel? Consider the factors presented in the book – intolerance, courage, cultural environment, education. Are there other factors that could be included?
2. Levy uses humor rather than drama to show racial tension between the blacks and the whites in her novel. The story of the segregation of black American GIs was a true situation that Levy found through her research. The British had no idea or experience in dealing with this form of racism, so they tried to accommodate all requests.  
Compare British and American racism as it is presented by Levy. Did she succeed in portraying the evils of bigotry with her humor?
3. Levy has structured this novel around four narrative voices, each of which represents a different aspect of the social divide.  
Are these voices balanced? Does one voice stand out from the rest, and why? Who do you think is Levy’s favorite or most interesting character?
4. The adjective “small” plays a significant role in Levy’s novel because it not only describes the two islands – Jamaica and Britain – but it addresses the people, their dreams, and their perspectives. In addition, many of her characters are physically small.  
Consider all sides of this concept in relation to the themes and the characters in the novel.
5. Levy feels that the immigration process not only changes those who have immigrated to a specific country, but it also profoundly affects the people who have accepted those same immigrants into their midst.  
Discuss this idea in light of the characters presented in this story.
6. Queenie’s baby is life’s circle complete and brings together the past and the future.  
Is this ending satisfactory and/or optimistic? As a mother, how can Queenie give up her child? Has she made a reasonable decision to ask Gilbert and Hortense to raise her baby? Consider the implications of each character’s response to this issue, including Bernard’s.