

EXAMEN D'ADMISSIBILITE ECRIT

Seconde Section Internationale, Session 2019

Vous écrirez directement vos réponses sur les copies prévues. Vous devez rendre la totalité des documents à la fin de l'épreuve en les plaçant dans votre copie.

The narrator is Kambili, a fifteen-year-old Nigerian girl.

The Reverend Sisters gave us our cards unsealed. I came second in my class. It was written in figures: "2/25." My form mistress, Sister Clara, had written, "Kambili is intelligent beyond her years, quiet and responsible." The principal, Mother Lucy, wrote, "A brilliant, obedient student and a daughter to
5 be proud of." But I knew Papa would not be proud. He had often told Jaja and me that he did not spend so much money on Daughters of the Immaculate Heart and St. Nicholas to have us let other children come first. Nobody had spent money on his own schooling, [...] yet he had always come first. I wanted to make Papa proud, to do as well as he had done. I needed him to touch the back
10 of my neck and tell me that I was fulfilling God's purpose. I needed him to hug me close and say that to whom much is given, much is also expected. I needed him to smile at me, in that way that lit up his face, that warmed something inside me. But I had come second. I was stained by failure.[...]

I was sitting at my study desk when Papa came home. He lumbered
15 upstairs, each heavy step creating turbulence in my head, and went into Jaja's room. He had come first, as usual, so Papa would be proud, would hug Jaja, leave his arm resting around Jaja's shoulders. He took a while in Jaja's room, though; I knew he was looking through each individual subject score, checking to see if any had decreased by one or two marks since last term. Something
20 pushed fluids into my bladder, and I rushed to the toilet. Papa was in my room when I came out.

"Good evening, Papa, *nno*."

"Did school go well?"

I wanted to say I came second so that he would know immediately, so that
25 I would acknowledge my failure, but instead I said, "Yes," and handed him the report card. He seemed to take forever to open it and even longer to read it. I tried to pace my breathing as I waited, knowing all the while that I could not.

"Who came first?" Papa asked, finally.

"Chinwe Jideze."

30 "Jideze? The girl who came second last term?"

"Yes," I said. My stomach was making sounds, hollow rumbling sounds that seemed too loud, that would not stop even when I sucked in my belly.

Papa looked at my report card for a while longer; then he said, "Come down for dinner."

35 [...]

When he was done, Papa said, "Kambili, come upstairs."

I followed him. [...] The cream décor in Papa's bedroom was changed every year but always to a slightly different shade of cream. The plush rug that sank in when you stepped on it was plain cream; the curtains had only a little
40 brown embroidery at the edges; the cream leather armchairs were placed close together as if two people were sitting in an intimate conversation. All that cream blended and made the room seem wider, as if it never ended, as if you could not run even if you wanted to, because there was nowhere to run to. When I had thought of heaven as a child, I visualized Papa's room, the softness, the
45 creaminess, the endlessness. I would snuggle into Papa's arms when harmattan¹ thunderstorms raged outside, flinging mangoes against the window netting and making the electric wires hit each other and spark bright orange flames. Papa would lodge me between his knees or wrap me in the cream blanket that smelled of safety.

50 I sat on a similar blanket now, on the edge of the bed. I slipped off my slippers and sank my feet into the rug and decided to keep them sunk in so that my toes would feel cushioned. So that a part of me would feel safe.

"Kambili," Papa said, breathing deeply. "You didn't put in your best this term. You came second because you chose to." His eyes were sad. Deep and
55 sad. I wanted to touch his face, to run my hand over his rubbery cheeks. There were stories in his eyes that I would never know.

Adapted from *Purple Hibiscus* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, 2004.

¹ harmattan = a dry, dusty wind

COMPREHENSION (20 points)

Answer the questions in order. Try to respect the number of words specified by developing several ideas in longer answers. When the number of words is not specified, answer in one sentence. 'In your own words' means you have to reformulate the ideas of the text.

1. a) What family members are present in the passage?
b) What kind of a school does Kambili go to?

2. *Vocabulary*: give an English definition or a French translation of the following words in context.

- | | | | |
|-----------------|--------------------|------------------|---------------------|
| a) proud (l. 5) | b) failure (l. 13) | c) check (l. 18) | d) decrease (l. 19) |
| e) rug (l. 38) | f) blend (l. 42) | g) wide (l. 42) | h) slippers (l. 51) |

3. *Fill in the blanks with words from the text*: Kambili has just received her _____. This term in Kambili's class, _____ came first and _____ came second, whereas last term _____ came first and _____ came second. In Jaja's class, _____ came first, as _____.

4. a) What is Kambili admired and praised for at school? *Answer in your own words.*
b) "But I knew Papa would not be proud." (l. 5) What reaction is Kambili anticipating and why? (*approx.40 words*)

5. "I was stained by failure." (l. 13) Explain the meaning of this quotation. (*approx. 40 words*)

6. Focus on lines 14 to 35. Quote three sentences to show how Kambili's body is reacting to the situation.

7. Focus on lines 36 to 52. How has Kambili's view of her Papa's bedroom changed? How did she see it before and how does she feel in it now? (*approx. 60 words*)

8. How does the reader feel while reading this passage? How do we react to the situation and to the narrator? Make reference to ideas but also the style of writing. (*approx. 60-80 words*)

WRITING (20 points)

Treat both subjects. On the whole, you should write approximately 300-350 words. Please indicate the number of words you used at the end of each subject. Up to ten points are available for the content of your answer, and up to ten points for the quality of your writing. Please do not write your name anywhere in your answers.

1. The following day, Papa accompanies Kambili to school. Write the scene from her point of view, and include some dialogue. Start with this and continue: "Where is your class?" he asked. I pointed to the building by the group of mango trees. Papa came out of the car with me and... (*150-200 words*)

2. Do you ever feel like adults (parents, teachers, coaches...) are putting too much pressure on you? How do you react? (*150-200 words*)