

Agrégation interne d'anglais

Session 2022

Épreuve EPC

**Exposé de la préparation
d'un cours**

EPC

351

Ce sujet comprend 3 documents :

- Document 1 : Saki, "Tea" (first published in 1914), *The Complete Short Stories of Saki*, London: Vintage Classics, 2016.
- Document 2 : "Afternoon Tea in London, a Delightful Experience", www.visitlondon.com.
- Document 3 : Tim Burton, "The Mad Tea Party", *Alice in Wonderland*, Walt Disney Pictures, 2010.

Compte tenu des caractéristiques de ce dossier et des différentes possibilités d'exploitation qu'il offre, vous indiquerez à quel niveau d'apprentissage vous pourriez le destiner et quels objectifs vous vous fixeriez. Vous présenterez et justifierez votre démarche pour atteindre ces objectifs.

Document 1 : Saki, "Tea" (first published in 1914), *The Complete Short Stories of Saki*, London: Vintage Classics, 2016., pp. 492 – 496.

Cushat-Prinkly walked across the Park towards the Sebastable residence in a frame of mind that was moderately complacent. As the thing was going to be done he was glad to feel that he was going to get it settled and off his mind that afternoon. Proposing marriage, even to a nice girl like Joan, was a rather irksome business, but one could not have a honeymoon in Minorca and a subsequent life of married happiness without such preliminary. He wondered what Minorca was really like as a place to stop in [...].

His Mediterranean musings were interrupted by the sound of a clock striking the half-hour. Half-past four. A frown of dissatisfaction settled on his face. He would arrive at the Sebastable mansion just at the hour of afternoon tea. Joan would be seated at a low table, spread with an array of silver kettles and cream-jugs and delicate porcelain tea-cups, behind which her voice would tinkle pleasantly in a series of little friendly questions about weak or strong tea, how much, if any, sugar, milk, cream, and so forth. "Is it one lump? I forgot. You do take milk, don't you? Would you like some more hot water, if it's too strong?"

Cushat-Prinkly had read of such things in scores of novels, and hundreds of actual experiences had told him that they were true to life. Thousands of women, at this solemn afternoon hour, were sitting behind dainty porcelain and silver fittings, with their voices tinkling pleasantly in a cascade of solicitous little questions. Cushat-Prinkly detested the whole system of afternoon tea. According to his theory of life a woman should lie on a divan or couch, talking with incomparable charm or looking unutterable thoughts, or merely silent as a thing to be looked on, and from behind a silken curtain a small Nubian page should silently bring in a tray with cups and dainties, to be accepted silently, as a matter of course, without drawn-out chatter about cream and sugar and hot water. If one's soul was really enslaved at one's mistress's feet how could one talk coherently about weakened tea? Cushat-Prinkly had never expounded his views on the subject to his mother; all her life she had been accustomed to tinkle pleasantly at tea-time behind dainty porcelain and silver, and if he had spoken to her about divans and Nubian pages she would have urged him to take a week's holiday at the seaside. Now, as he passed through a tangle of small streets that led indirectly to the elegant Mayfair terrace for which he was bound, a horror at the idea of confronting Joan Sebastable at her tea-table seized on him. A momentary deliverance presented itself; on one floor of a narrow little house at the noisier end of Esquimault Street lived Rhoda Ellam, a sort of remote cousin, who made a living by creating hats out of costly materials. The hats really looked as if they had come from Paris; the cheques she got

40 for them unfortunately never looked as if they were going to Paris. However,
Rhoda appeared to find life amusing and to have a fairly good time in spite
of her straitened circumstances. Cushat-Prinkly decided to climb up to her
floor and defer by half-an-hour or so the important business which lay
45 before him; by spinning out his visit he could contrive to reach the
Sebastable mansion after the last vestiges of dainty porcelain had been
cleared away.

Rhoda welcomed him into a room that seemed to do duty as workshop,
sitting-room, and kitchen combined, and to be wonderfully clean and
comfortable at the same time.

50 "I'm having a picnic meal," she announced. "There's caviare in that jar at
your elbow. Begin on that brown bread-and-butter while I cut some more.
Find yourself a cup; the teapot is behind you. Now tell me about hundreds
of things."

She made no other allusion to food, but talked amusingly and made her
55 visitor talk amusingly too. At the same time she cut the bread-and-butter
with a masterly skill and produced red pepper and sliced lemon, where so
many women would merely have produced reasons and regrets for not
having any. Cushat-Prinkly found that he was enjoying an excellent tea
without having to answer as many questions about it as a Minister for
60 Agriculture might be called on to reply to during an outbreak of cattle
plague.

"And now tell me why you have come to see me," said Rhoda suddenly.
"You arouse not merely my curiosity but my business instincts. I hope
you've come about hats. I heard that you had come into a legacy the other
65 day, and, of course, it struck me that it would be a beautiful and desirable
thing for you to celebrate the event by buying brilliantly expensive hats for
all your sisters. They may not have said anything about it, but I feel sure
the same idea has occurred to them. Of course, with Goodwood on us, I am
rather rushed just now, but in my business we're accustomed to that; we
70 live in a series of rushes — like the infant Moses."

"I didn't come about hats," said her visitor. "In fact, I don't think I really
came about anything. I was passing and I just thought I'd look in and see
you. Since I've been sitting talking to you, however, a rather important idea
has occurred to me. If you'll forget Goodwood for a moment and listen to
75 me, I'll tell you what it is."

Some forty minutes later James Cushat-Prinkly returned to the bosom of
his family, bearing an important piece of news.

"I'm engaged to be married," he announced.

A rapturous outbreak of congratulation and self-applause broke out.

80 "Ah, we knew! We saw it coming! We foretold it weeks ago!"

"I'll bet you didn't," said Cushat-Prinkly. "If any one had told me at lunch-time to-day that I was going to ask Rhoda Ellam to marry me and that she was going to accept me I would have laughed at the idea." [...]

85 On a September afternoon of the same year, after the honeymoon in Minorca had ended, Cushat-Prinkly came into the drawing-room of his new house in Granchester Square. Rhoda was seated at a low table, behind a service of dainty porcelain and gleaming silver. There was a pleasant tinkling note in her voice as she handed him a cup.

90 "You like it weaker than that, don't you? Shall I put some more hot water to it? No?"

Document 2 : "Afternoon Tea in London, a Delightful Experience",
www.visitlondon.com.

Document vidéo (3'00") à consulter sur la tablette multimédia fournie.

Document 3 : Tim Burton, "The Mad Tea Party", *Alice in Wonderland*, Walt Disney Pictures, 2010.



Document iconographique également consultable sur la tablette multimédia fournie.