

Agrégation interne d'anglais

Session 2021

Épreuve EPC

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

**EPC
385**

Ce sujet comprend 3 documents :

- Document 1 : 1A: "The Shard defies its critics" (screenshot)
www.azuremagazine.com, July 17, 2012.
1B: Hadani Ditmars, "The Shard defies its critics", *Azure Magazine*, July 17, 2012.
- Document 2 : Discovery Channel Southeast Asia, "How We Invented the World: the Gherkin", November 23, 2012.
- Document 3 : Ken Follett, "Introduction", *The Pillars of the Earth* (1989), Pan Books, 2007, pp. vii-ix.

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 1A: “The Shard defies its critics” (screenshot), www.azuremagazine.com, July, 17 2012.

The screenshot shows the top portion of a web article. On the left, the 'AZURE' logo is in large, bold, black letters. To its right, the page title 'London 2012: The Shard defies its critics' is displayed in a smaller font. Further right, there are icons for 'SIGN IN' and a search icon. Below the title, the article's main headline 'London 2012: The Shard defies its critics' is repeated in a larger font. Underneath the headline is a short introductory paragraph: 'London's newest and most controversial icon, by Renzo Piano Building Workshop, stakes its place on the Thames.' Below this paragraph are metadata details: 'WORDS Hadani Ditmars', 'PHOTOS Michel Denancé', 'POSTED Jul 17, 2012', and 'SHARE' followed by links for 'Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Email'. To the right of the text is a large photograph of the Shard building in London, viewed from across the River Thames. The Shard is a tall, thin, glass skyscraper with a distinctive pyramidal shape. The river is in the foreground, and other buildings and bridges are visible in the background under a cloudy sky. A small white box with a close button (X) and the page number '1/6' is overlaid on the bottom right corner of the photograph.

Document 1B: Hadani Ditmars, “The Shard defies its critics”, *Azure Magazine*, July 17, 2012.

London’s newest and most controversial icon, by Renzo Piano Building Workshop, stakes its place on the Thames.

5 Pity the Shard. London’s iconic new glass tower, unveiled on July 5th to great ceremony, was conceived in boom times and born in mid-economic downturn. Its long-awaited completion — heralded by royalty and marked by an impressive laser show (and Copland’s *Fanfare for the Common Man* performed on a nearby barge by the London Philharmonic) — was blighted by a deluge of criticism. Most of it had nothing to do with the architecture.

10 The irregular pyramidal tower was inspired by nearby railway lines, the London spires depicted by 18th-century Venetian painter Canaletto, and sailing masts. And it has become a Rorschach test for all kinds of malcontents. “It’s a Qatari plot to take over England,” screamed the comments sections of broadsheets. While it’s true that over 80 per cent of the £450-million mixed-use building is owned by Qatari interests, it was the

15 brainchild of Irvine Sellar. The Londoner first met with Piano at a Berlin restaurant in 2000, where the architect reportedly sketched on the back of a menu an iceberg-like edifice emerging from the Thames. [...]

20 “It’s a blight on the skyline,” others have vented. But it will soon be in the company of other tall buildings, like Kohn Pedersen Fox’s 288-metre Pinnacle, which seems to have escaped the same scathing reviews. While Norman Foster’s Gherkin elicited strong opinions, it was perceived as a “British” building. And like most of London’s towers, it was in the city, not the South Bank, where the Shard stands conspicuously alone. Then, there’s the Shard’s relationship to its perceived overpowering of St Paul’s. Views of
25 the cathedral were liberated when a series of mid-century towers were demolished in the 1970s and 80s. Now, the view corridor from Parliament Hill reveals the Shard towering above — but not obscuring — St Paul’s. Oh, the cheek of it!

30 Perhaps it’s just a spate of anti-modern sentiment. As one commentator put it, “English Heritage has this simple formula: Tall = bad.” But in a city with a vertical, high-density future, this argument seems regressive at best.

35 These were all points to ponder at the ritual unveiling of the Shard on that recent Thursday night when all of London seemed to be out on the streets. Since only those close to the barge could actually hear the orchestra, it was mainly a visual experience. Watching the tower change colour with 12 laser beams pointed at key buildings in London — St Paul’s and the Gherkin included — was like witnessing a sci-fi Masonic handshake, or a secret architectural pentagram.

40 At times the Shard appeared like a luminescent, alien obelisk. (A friend said it reminded him of a vertical chicken roaster he’d once had in Stockholm.)

45 The crowd spilled out into the streets afterwards and sang round random street pianos chained to the ground. On the South Bank in front of the Tate, where the new Damien Hirst exhibit is showing, a dark figure out of Oliver Twist played sinister oompapa music from a box, and then disappeared into the night like a ghost of London’s past. In the distance, corporate and Olympic logos glowed in the dark. St Paul’s looked on dignified, if slightly askance, from the other side of the Thames, while the Shard beamed on, oblivious.

Document 2 : Discovery Channel Southeast Asia, "How We Invented the World: the Gherkin", November 23, 2012.

Document vidéo (2'14") à consulter sur la tablette multimédia fournie.

Document 3 : Ken Follett, "Introduction", *The Pillars of the Earth* (1989), Pan Books, 2007, pp. vii-ix.

I started trying to write novels in my middle twenties, while working as a reporter on the London *Evening News*. I realized then that I had never taken much interest in the cityscape around me, and I had no vocabulary to describe the buildings in which my characters had their adventures. So I
5 bought *An Outline of European Architecture* by Nikolaus Pevsner. That book gave me eyes with which to look at buildings in general and churches in particular. Pevsner got really passionate when he wrote about Gothic cathedrals. The invention of the pointed arch, he said, was a rare event in
10 history, when the solution to a technical problem — how to build a taller church — was also sublimely beautiful.

Soon after I read Pevsner's book, my newspaper sent me to the East Anglian city of Peterborough. I have long forgotten what story I was covering, but I shall always remember what I did after filing it. I had to wait
15 an hour for a train back to London so, remembering Pevsner's fascinating and passionate descriptions of medieval architecture, I went to see Peterborough Cathedral.

It was one of those moments.

The west front of Peterborough has three huge Gothic arches like doorways for giants. The inside is older than the façade, with arcades of
20 regular round Norman arches in stately procession up the aisle. Like all great churches, it is both tranquil and beautiful. But it was more than that. Because of Pevsner's book, I had some inkling of the labour that had gone into this. I knew the story of humankind's efforts to build ever-taller and more beautiful churches. I understood the place of this building in history,
25 my history.

I was enraptured by Peterborough Cathedral.

Cathedral visiting became a hobby for me. Every few months I would drive to one of England's old cities, check into a hotel and study the church. This way I saw Canterbury, Salisbury, Winchester, Gloucester and Lincoln,
30 each one unique, each with an intriguing story to tell. Most people take an hour or two to 'do' a cathedral, but I like to have a couple of days.

The stones themselves reveal the construction history: stops and starts, damage and reconstruction, extensions in times of prosperity, and stained-glass tributes to the wealthy men who generally paid the bills. Another story
35 is told by the way the church is sited in the town. Lincoln faces across the

street to the castle, religious and military power nose to nose. Winchester has a neat grid of streets, laid out by a medieval bishop who fancied himself a town planner. Salisbury moved, in the thirteenth century, from a defensive hilltop site — where the ruins of the old cathedral are still visible
40 — to an open meadow, showing that permanent peace had arrived.