

# BACCALAURÉAT GÉNÉRAL

**SESSION 2011**

**ANGLAIS**

**LANGUE VIVANTE 2**

**Séries L / S**

Durée de l'épreuve 3 heures – Coefficient : 4

*L'usage de la calculatrice et du dictionnaire n'est pas autorisé.*

Dès que ce sujet vous est remis, assurez-vous qu'il est complet.  
Ce sujet comporte 3 pages numérotées de 1/3 à 3/3.

Compréhension et traduction	10 points
Expression	10 points

Plastic Tolstoy was named Plastic by his mother, who thought that plastic was the most beautiful material on Earth.

'Wood will always be wood and stone will always be stone,' she would say. 'But plastic can be anything, anytime, anywhere.'

5 'It's cheap and it's common,' grumbled her husband.

'So am I,' Mrs Tolstoy would reply. 'So is rock'n'roll.'

Then she would peer down at her son, asleep in his cot, and say again, as she always did, 'Plastic can be anything, anytime, anywhere, my darling. And so can you.'

10 Mrs Tolstoy was professor of Popular Culture at the University of Disney World in Florida. It was there that she had developed the thesis for her best-selling book *The King is Not Dead*, which demonstrated conclusively that Elvis did not die. He could not have died, Mrs Tolstoy asserted, because he had in fact never existed. The meticulous detail with which she documented and then disproved every single sighting of the King between the years 1935 and 1977 (the period of his supposed 'life') obsessed the nation for nearly  
15 a whole morning.

Mrs Tolstoy used the revenue from her book to set up a school of modern art, dedicated to the principle that the Barbie Doll was greater sculpture than the Venus de Milo, and that a reproduction of a great painting was of more value than the original. As she explained, with an original all you got was a painting, whereas a reproduction could  
20 also be a tablecloth, an apron, indeed, anything one cared to print it on. [...]

Plastic was his mother's son, but his eye was better than hers. Whilst she worshipped populism via its products, he saw that the real beauty lay in that which surrounds the products, the marketing. It was a lesson that he learnt early on, as he often explained to the numerous documentary film-makers who were endlessly doing documentary films  
25 about his life.

'I was at this kid's party, you know? With the clown and cakes and stuff. Anyway, we all got a present of a toy gun. Brand new, still in the box, right? Well, let me tell you, those boxes were big! And the picture on them? Wow! A marine blasting away with an M16! We were in heaven. So we open the boxes, right? And of course there's this tiny little toy  
30 inside and all the other kids think they've been ripped off. But not me, I don't think so. All I could think of was how beautiful that box was! It looked so big and exciting, it had fooled us all. I lost the toy that same day, but I kept the box a long time.'

Plastic had realised the great truth. A truth he would later embody in his First Law of Attrition Marketing. Anyone can produce any amount of crap, Tolstoy would later explain, in  
35 his famous educational video entitled *Selling: My Soul*, the clever part is to get someone to buy it.

'Listen,' the video explained, 'the world is one big marketplace full of people buying and selling useless stuff that nobody ever dreamt they wanted. So why do they buy it? Because, while the product may be ugly, the marketing is beautiful. You don't believe me?  
40 Turn it round, consider trying to sell a truly great product but with useless [...] marketing. You couldn't do it, right? The message is the only thing that counts.'

At the age of twelve Plastic Tolstoy made his first million. He had been pondering the delight with which his friends searched for the little snap-together toys hidden in their cereal boxes.

45 'Toys in cereals, that's great,' the boy Plastic thought, 'but timid.'

So he wrote to the manufacturers, suggesting that they reverse the ration and market boxes full of snap-together plastic toys with a free cornflake hidden amongst them. Kids went crazy for it.

Ben Elton, *This Other Eden*, 2000.

### NOTE IMPORTANTE AUX CANDIDATS :

Les candidats traiteront tous les exercices **sur la copie** qui leur sera fournie et veilleront à :

- respecter l'**ordre des questions** et reporter la **numérotation** sur la copie (numéro de l'exercice et, le cas échéant, la lettre repère ; ex. : 1a, 1b, etc.)
- composer des phrases complètes à chaque fois qu'il leur est demandé de rédiger. Le **nombre de mots** indiqué constitue une exigence minimale. En l'absence d'indication, les candidats répondront brièvement (moins de 20 mots) à la question posée.
- faire précéder les citations éventuellement demandées du **numéro de ligne** dans le texte.

### COMPREHENSION

1. Who are the two main characters? How are they related to each other?
2. In which country does the story take place? Justify by quoting the text.
3. List Mrs Tolstoy's various professional activities.
4. Choose from the following list the two adjectives which best describe Plastic and justify your choice by quoting from the text :  
*shy useless wealthy foolish well-known*
5. a) Describe Mrs Tolstoy's taste in art and beauty.  
b) Compare Mrs Tolstoy's taste in art and beauty with her son's.
6. When and where did Plastic Tolstoy realise his 'great truth'? (line 33)
7. How would you describe the tone of the text? Include one quotation in your answer.

**8. Cette question sera traitée par les candidats de la série L uniquement :**  
Traduire en français le passage de "Mrs Tolstoy used the revenue..." (line 16) à "... to print it on." (line 20)

### EXPRESSION

**Traiter obligatoirement les deux sujets. (300 mots au total, soit environ 150 mots pour chaque sujet)**

1. Plastic Tolstoy has just died. You are a journalist. You write an article about his life for your newspaper. Write the article.
2. Have you ever received a present that meant a lot to you? Explain why it was so important.