



**LANGUE VIVANTE I**

**Epreuve du 1<sup>er</sup> groupe**

**ANGLAIS**

**Generation Rental : the Housing Crisis Facing Today's Youth**

For many young people the possibility of owning their own home is a distant dream. Instead they are trapped in a cycle of short-term lets in sub-standard housing. The word "home" used to mean more than just the place you left your stuff while you were at work. It spoke of long-term stability and of investment in a community to which we belonged and which belonged to us. Home was the place, no matter how humble, where we got to let our hair down and mark how tall our children had grown this year on the door frame. Home meant being able to have a pet, come and go as we pleased and rely on the people next door to feed our cat and put out our bins when we were on holiday.

My own experience with finding and making a home is fairly typical of my generation. I spent my childhood in a terraced house on a street full of families. We were friends with the neighbors. On the ending of my parent's marriage, I lived with my mother and siblings in emergency homeless accommodation while waiting to be housed by the council. It took seven months. There are never enough council houses, even fewer now. Since then I've lived in housing association properties, dodgy sublets, student halls, shared houses and dilapidated private rentals. I'm 31 and I've had at least 14 addresses – more, if you count student housing.

My story isn't unusual. I'm one of the luckier generation renters in that I haven't been housed with my children in a single-room for months on end, nor have I had to sleep in my car or on a park bench while I wait for an opening in a crowded hostel or in a "converted" garage or hastily insulated garden shed. But while the fortunate renters of my generation – those who rely on the kindness of parents and friends – may have a place to store their possessions and to sleep at night, a real home, the home we've all been taught to hope for since we were children, is still a long way off.

Even for those in the best possible circumstances, the way the unregulated private rental industry is working has changed something fundamental about what home means to us. We've lost the privacy that makes a house a home. Many working young people and couples are ineligible for what little social housing there is left and, especially in our big cities, they are unable to afford ever-increasing rental costs or to save for their future. Many of us have friends who live in multiple-occupancy rental houses with a revolving cast of strangers, living rooms and dining rooms turned into extra bedrooms -the only communal space a shared kitchen too small for six people to store more than a day's food, never mind cook and eat together.

Regular and invasive house inspections by letting agents and landlords are constant reminders that we tenants are guests, possibly unwelcome ones. In one house I rented, the shower leaked so badly that part of the living room ceiling caved in. When we have home behind us, we're free to strike out elsewhere, be brave, be adventurous, be ambitious – but you can't put down roots if you don't know where you're going to be living next year. I have happy memories of my granny's council house. It was her home : the place we'd always want to come and visit. For many tenants, family life is put on hold until that kind of security arrives – if it ever does.

(Adapted) Jean Ashworth. *The Observer*, Sunday 16 march 2014 [www.theguardian.com](http://www.theguardian.com)

**Sublet** : Sous-location ; **rental** : location ; **landlord** : logeur

**I. TEXT COMPREHENSION (8 marks)**

**A. Which feeling is expressed by the following phrases? Answer in one word: (1 mark)**

For many young people the possibility of owning their own home is a distant dream.(L. 1)	1-
The home we've all been taught to hope for ... is still a long way off. (L. 18-19)	

**B. Find in the text the paragraphs and the phrases illustrating promiscuity and physical deterioration of housing: (2 marks)**

Situations	Paragraphs	Phrases
Promiscuity	2-	3-
Physical deterioration of housing	4-	5-

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C. Find in paragraph 3 two phrases referring to homelessness (2 marks)

Homelessness	6-
	7-

D. What does "It" refer to in, "It took seven months" (L. 11)?  
8..... (1 mark)

E. Read the following statements carefully and indicate whether they are True or False. Justify your answers by quoting a specific phrase from the text (2 marks)

9- Few working couples can afford decent housing in big cities: .....  
Justification .....

10-Renters are well treated by property owners and housing agents: .....  
Justification .....

II. **LINGUISTIC AND COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE (6 marks)**

A. Fill in the gaps with the appropriate form of the word in parentheses (2 marks)

Speculation in housing prices makes it harder and harder for people to find accommodation. Most candidates to private sector renting are so (**despair**) 11..... that they borrow from the first bank that will offer them a loan. In parts of Europe, controlled rents and long leases on well-maintained properties in areas where people would (**actual**) 12. ....choose to live are the norm. Before Margaret Thatcher's attempt to turn all tenants into house owners, many British people were more (**comfort**) 13. .... with renting. The latest British Attitude Survey shows that a majority of those polled would (**preference**) 14. .... to own a house.

B. Wagane and Mossane are having a serious discussion. Wagane is Mossane's lodger. He decided to raise the rent without any prior notice to her. Complete their argument meaningfully. Choose the right word in parentheses if suggested. (2 marks)

Wagane: Hi Madam, I hope you are alright.

Mossane: It could be better, thanks.

Wagane: You received the notification about the increase in rental fees, 15. .... you ?

Mossane: I was not aware 16. ....that. (**in – on – of**) How come you made that decision alone without 17. .... me? (**say- tell**)

Wagane: Anyway, my nephew told me that you received the letter, so I wish you 18. .... a more positive attitude to information.

Mossane: If I had received the so called letter, I (19)..... (**not/react**) this way. Anyway I'm not ready to pay a single penny more!

C. Complete the following dialog meaningfully using the correct form of the words given in parentheses: (2marks)

A: This apartment building is (20)..... (**afford**)! It's more than my monthly salary!

B: If I (21)..... (**be**) you, I'd try something (22) ..... (**cheap**).

A: I guess you're right! On the other hand the housing industry shouldn't (23)..... (**regulate**) because low-income workers need protection.

III. **WRITING Choose 1 option ( between 200 and 250 words) (6 marks)**

D. **Letter writing:** Housing issues are very serious in your country. Write a letter to the minister in charge of that sector to pose the issue and propose possible solutions.

E. **Essay writing:** The refusal of many Senegalese landlords to respect the law about decreasing rental fees has generated many problems. What is your position about this?