

X115/201

NATIONAL
QUALIFICATIONS
2010

THURSDAY, 13 MAY
1.00 PM – 2.00 PM

ENGLISH
INTERMEDIATE 2
Close Reading

Answer all questions.

30 marks are allocated to this paper.

Read the passage carefully and then answer **all** the questions, **using your own words as far as possible**.

The questions will ask you to show that:

you understand the main ideas and important details in the passage—in other words, **what** the writer has said (**Understanding—U**);

you can identify, using appropriate terms, the techniques the writer has used to get across these ideas—in other words, **how** he has said it (**Analysis—A**);

you can, using appropriate evidence, comment on how effective the writer has been—in other words, **how well** he has said it (**Evaluation—E**).

A code letter (U, A, E) is used alongside each question to identify its purpose for you. The number of marks attached to each question will give some indication of the length of answer required.



The Mighty Qin

This piece was written round about the time that an exhibition of some of the warriors from the ancient Chinese Terracotta Army was on display in the British Museum in London.

Qin Shi Who? My reaction entirely. I had heard of the Terracotta Army, of course. I had even seen some of them when a vanguard of warriors came to London in the 1980s. But I couldn't have told you who Qin Shihuangdi (pronounced *Chin Shur Hwang Dee*) was. Even if you'd said he was the First Emperor of China, I'd have had only the haziest
5 recollection of what you were talking about.

That probably goes for the vast majority of people in the West. And given that he is one of the most colossal figures ever to have walked the earth, that is rather shocking. For Qin Shihuangdi, its First Emperor, created China more than two millennia ago, establishing the world's longest-lasting empire. A visionary, a brutal tyrant and a
10 megalomaniac, he is the greatest historical figure that most of us have never heard of.

I only began to grasp this a few months ago when I travelled to Xi'an to visit the First Emperor's mind-boggling mausoleum, home to his Terracotta Army. "This is one of the people who changed the world," said Neil MacGregor, director of the British Museum. "There are terribly few historical figures whose achievements lasted like that.
15 This is really one of the great, great figures in human history."

The written historical sources for the man who bequeathed his name to his country are scant. Born Ying Zheng in 259 BC, he was the son of the king of Qin, in central China. He succeeded at the age of 13 and there was a period when he ruled with a regent. Then, when he was properly established on the throne, he embarked on what was
20 China's only real revolution until the 20th century.

Through clever diplomacy and brilliant military strategy he conquered and subdued neighbouring states. He achieved this by developing a highly organised army. Qin chariots had an improved design of smaller wheels with more spokes that provided greater stability and durability. The width of axles was made uniform, a seemingly small
25 innovation with massive repercussions: the chariots could ride relatively smoothly down the same ruts in the road and so avoid churning up the entire highway. The light infantry were armed with extremely sharp bronze weapons and crossbows and supported by cavalry.

This formidable war machine brought the warring states under the control of Qin, and
30 the heart of the area that we now call China was united for the first time in 221 BC. Ying Zheng decided to mark the success by renaming himself Qin Shihuangdi, or First Emperor of Qin.

The first Emperor survived at least three assassination attempts in subsequent years, incidents that served to tighten his grip on every aspect of life. He created a surveillance
35 culture in which neighbours were expected to spy on each other and lived in fear of terrible punishments for failing to do so or for breaking the many laws. One of the most miserable punishments, which very often proved to be a death sentence, was to be dispatched into the wilderness to toil on the construction of the wall Qin Shihuangdi had ordered to be built along the northern frontier of the empire.

40 Although there had been a tradition of building walls to mark the boundaries of territory and keep neighbours out, the First Emperor's undertaking was the most significant building project to date, aiming to protect the borders from nomads. His wall was rather farther north than what we think of today as the Great Wall, which is the series of fortifications (not one single wall) built in the Ming Dynasty, which ruled China for

45 almost three centuries from 1368. Little of the Qin wall remains beyond a few mounds
that are believed to be from the First Emperor's era. But he is regarded as the
grandfather of the Great Wall, that iconic symbol of China's historical separateness and
age-old industriousness.

The First Emperor's imprint on the lives of the inhabitants of his far-flung kingdoms
50 was seen further. He unified the script, demanding that all states write the pictographs
of ancient Chinese in the same way. So, although the words might be pronounced
differently in different parts of the empire, once they were written down everyone who
could read could understand each other, a particular advantage for traders. Some of the
pictographs are recognisable in the language today, and the principle of a single written
55 language that can be spoken in different ways remains.

But for the First Emperor, establishing complete control over his empire was not
enough. He wanted to rule forever. If he couldn't have immortality in this world, the
next best thing would be to rule in the nether world. We knew about his tomb mound
because the ancient sources referred to it, and it has always been there.

60 The tomb itself may never be opened because of the sensitivities of disturbing the
Emperor, although some archaeologists hope that improved technology may one day
allow some form of exploration.

The ancient sources refer to 700,000 people labouring on the tomb, but make no
reference to what else the Emperor had devised under the ground. This is presumably
65 because they didn't know about his subterranean empire, which lay undisturbed until
1974. Those of the 600 pits that have been examined have yielded almost 1,800 mass-
produced clay figures with another 6,000 believed to exist. In this mountain fastness
Qin Shihuangdi wanted an army to protect him from his enemies, but also wanted his
civil servants on hand and musicians and acrobats to entertain him.

70 "I can't think of anyone else who had the scale of ambition to think of replicating their
entire kingdom," says MacGregor. "Nobody else in human history has attempted to do
that, and what is fascinating is that it's the eternal underground that has survived and
nothing else. We have no buildings, we have no writings, this is all that survives. The
people making the figures knew they were making them to serve the Emperor and live
75 forever. And in a funny way they have."

The Emperor went to his tomb rather earlier than he had intended. In 210 BC, on one
of his imperial progresses, he fell ill and died in his carriage.

There is no substitute for seeing the mass ranks of the Terracotta Army. But the British
Museum wants to do two things: show visitors a selection of warriors up close in a way
80 that is not possible in Xi'an, and tell the story of the man whose breathtaking
megalomania gave us one of the wonders of the world. The telling of that story is long
overdue.

Damian Whitworth in *The Times*

1. Looking in the opening paragraph (lines 1–5) for your answer, explain **in your own words** what the writer’s original “reaction” to the name Qin Shihuangdi was. 1 U
2. The first paragraph (lines 1–5) is written in a chatty style. Identify **one** expression or feature from these lines which contributes to this chattiness, and explain why it does so. 2 A
3. Look at paragraph 2 (lines 6–10).
Give **in your own words two** reasons why it is “rather shocking” that most people in the West do not know about Qin. 2 U
4. Show how any **one** feature of Neil MacGregor’s word choice (see lines 12–15) makes it clear that he thinks of Qin as someone special. 2 A
5. Explain **in your own words two** of the consequences of the improvements Qin made to his war chariots (see lines 24–26). 2 U
6. How appropriate is the expression “formidable war machine” (line 29) at this point in the passage? 3 E
7. Explain **in your own words** any **two** ways in which Qin managed to “tighten his grip on every aspect of life” (line 34). 2 U
8. What does the writer gain by using “toil” (line 38) rather than the word “work”? 1 A
9. The writer calls the Great Wall an “iconic symbol” (line 47).
(a) Why is it appropriate to call the wall a “symbol”? 1 A/E
(b) **In your own words**, explain fully what aspects of China it symbolises. 3 U
10. Explain how the sentence “But for the First Emperor, establishing complete control over his empire was not enough.” (lines 56–57) works as a link between paragraphs at this point. 2 A
11. Show fully how the writer introduces a **tone** of doubt when he writes about the prospects for opening the tomb (lines 60–62). 2 A
12. How does the writer convey the grandness or large scale of the tomb in lines 63–69? You should refer to technique as well as content. 2 A
13. Show how an aspect of what Neil MacGregor says (lines 70–75) effectively conveys his sense of wonder.
Your answer should refer to an example of **word choice or structure**. 2 E
14. In what sense does the writer use “funny” in line 75? 1 U
15. Explain why any example of the **word choice** in the final paragraph (lines 78–82) contributes to a neat conclusion to the passage. 2 A

Total (30)

[END OF QUESTION PAPER]

[Open out for Questions]

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Article is adapted from “China’s Colossus” by Damian Whitworth, taken from *The Times*, *Thursday 30 August 2007*. Reproduced by permission of NI Syndication Ltd © The Times 30 August 2007.