

NAME.....

English Test

CLASS

DATE.....

20

1 My dad came to this country in 1948, on the Empire Windrush ship. He was one of the
pioneers. One of the 492 people who looked around the old British Empire colony of
5 Jamaica, saw that there were no jobs, no prospects, and decided to chance his arm in
the Mother Country. His identical twin brother had been in the RAF, stationed in
England, during the war; and was returning to do a further round of service. My dad
accompanied him, leaving behind in Jamaica his new bride, my mum, who waited
impatiently for the call to join him.

10 I don't know what my dad's aspirations were when he arrived in Britain - he
certainly didn't realise that he was making history at the time. But I do know that, when
he boarded the ship, he knew himself to be a British citizen. He travelled on a British
passport. Britain was the country that all Jamaican children learned about at school.
15 They sang God Save The King and Rule Britannia. They believed Britain was a green
and pleasant land - if not the centre of the world, then certainly the centre of a great and
important Empire that spanned the globe, linking all sorts of countries into a family of
nations. Far from the idea that he was travelling to a foreign place, he was travelling to
the centre of his country, and as such he would slip-in and fit-in immediately. Jamaica,
he thought, was just Britain in the sun.

20 There was a point when my mum had doubts about this emigration, on hearing
stories of the treatment the first travellers had received. She wanted my dad to return.
But it was too late; he already loved England by then. [...]My mum joined my dad in his
one room in west London six months after the Windrush had docked. But they soon
found that they were foreigners in England, and this shocked them. The things they
25 thought of as quintessentially English - manners, politeness, rounded vowels from well-
spoken people - were not in evidence. They suffered bad housing - by no means the
plight of black people alone in those post-war days: the signs in windows read "no
niggers, no dogs, no Irish". My dad faced incredible hostility when looking for
somewhere to live because of the colour of his skin. He had a job with the post office.
30 My mum, a trained teacher in Jamaica, had to sew to make a living here. She worked in
sweat-shops with other foreigners, Czechs, Poles, Greeks, all fall-out from the war. She
had one advantage: she spoke English. And one disadvantage: she was black (or
coloured, as we were termed then).

35 I was embarrassed that my parents were not English. One of the reasons was that
no one around me was interested in the country my parents came from. To them, it was
just a place full of inferior black people. They asked - oh, they asked all the time. "Where
are you from?" But if I answered "Jamaica", lips would curl or tongues would tut. They
didn't want to know about the sun, the sugar cane, the rum punch. They didn't want to
try our rice and peas. I remember a white American girl coming to school. Everyone
wanted to be her friend. To see her toys, to hear her parents' wonderful accent, to try
their food with an "Ooohh isn't it lovely". America was a great place to come from.

Andrea Levy, This is my England, *The Guardian Weekend*, February 19, 2000

Andrea Levy has published three novels, Fruit Of The Lemon, Every Light In The House Burnin, and Never Far From Nowhere.

Full article here: http://elt.britcoun.org.pl/i_engl.htm

1- Provide information about the narrator

- a) Nationality: b) Origins:
b) Living place today:

2- True or false, justify by quoting from the text

- a) The narrator's father had just married when he left Jamaica. TRUE / FALSE
.....(line.....)
- b) The narrator's father travelled to Britain on his own (alone) TRUE / FALSE
.....(line.....)
- c) For the narrator's father, travelling to Britain was like travelling abroad. TRUE / FALSE
.....(line.....)
- d) The narrator's mother was not so confident as the father. TRUE / FALSE
.....(line.....)
- e) In England, people were very polite with them. TRUE / FALSE
.....(line.....)
- f) At school, the other pupils were curious about the narrator's culture. TRUE / FALSE
.....(line.....)

3- What do the underlined pronouns refer to?

- a) My dad accompanied him: (line 6)
- b) The call to join him (line 7).....
- c) They believed Britain (line 12).....
- d) This shocked them (line 22).....
- e) This shocked them (line 22).....
- f) It was just a place full of inferior black people (line 32-33).....
- g) Everyone wanted to be her friend.(line 36-37)
- h) Their food (line 37).....

4- Compare and account for the mother's conditions at work to that of her colleagues (find at least one similarity and two differences)

5- Compare and account for the pupils' attitude towards the Narrator and towards the American girl

6- The signs in windows read "no niggers, no dogs, no Irish" (line 25). What does it reveal about the British Society at the time?

7- "My parents were not English" (line 31). What nationality were the narrator's parents?

8-" I was embarrassed that my parents were not English. One of the reasons was that no one around me was interested in the country my parents came from" (line 31-32)
Rephrase these two sentences into one single sentence: "One of the reasons....."