Exercise walk-through

1.2
Paper 1 skills: the unseen ethnographic text

International Baccalaureate · IB Diploma · Social and Cultural Anthropology · SL

Thinking like an anthropologist

- **Ethnocentrism** : judging other cultures by the standards of your own, as Miner's readers did before they saw the joke.
- **Cultural relativism** : trying to understand a practice within its own cultural context before you judge it. (Understanding is not the same as approving.)
- **Reflexivity** : thinking about how your own background (age, gender, nationality, class) shapes what you see and what people tell you.
- **Comparison** : anthropology compares many societies, so that assumptions that seem natural in one place become visible.

Answering Paper 1

- Paper 1 gives you an unseen text: an extract from an ethnography.
- The first questions ask you to identify and explain what the text shows; the last asks one of the course's big questions, such as the IB's sample: *How are we the same as and different from each other?
- Discuss with references to at least two sources of ethnographic material and examples from the passage.*
- 1.

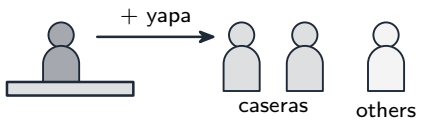
Common errors

- Judging another group's customs by your own (**ethnocentrism**) instead of asking what they mean to the people who practise them.
- Treating **cultural relativism** as "anything goes"; it is a method for understanding, not a rule that every practice is good.
- Writing about a concept in general without anchoring it in the text or an ethnographic example.

Exercises 2.1·2.2

2.1 Describe the practice of the ***yapa*** in the text. [2]

2.2 Explain how the *yapa* creates **belonging** between sellers and *caseras*. [3]



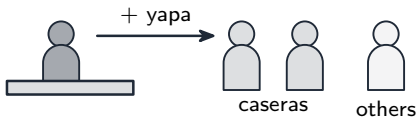
Exercises 2.1·2.2

2.1 Describe the practice of the ***yapa*** in the text. [2]

2.1

the seller adds a small extra amount, e.g. a potato or herbs, to the bags of regular customers (caseras); other buyers pay the same price but receive no extra

2.2 Explain how the *yapa* creates **belonging** between sellers and *caseras*. [3]



2.2

the extra is given only to regular customers, which marks them as insiders; the gift creates an obligation to return and buy again (reciprocity, Mauss); so a commercial exchange becomes a lasting personal relationship

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Exercises 2.3·2.4

2.3 Explain how the text shows **change** in exchange, and **one** possible cause. [4]

2.4 Compare the exchange in the text with an ethnography you have studied (author, group, place). Give **one** similarity and **one** difference. [6]

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2.3

personal market exchange based on relationships is being replaced, for some, by impersonal supermarket shopping; evidence: “for people who do not know anyone”; younger buyers shop there; a cause, e.g. migration of new people into town who have no market ties; or convenience, fixed prices, wider choice, changing tastes of the young

2.4 Compare the exchange in the text with an ethnography you have studied (author, group, place). Give **one** similarity and **one** difference. [6]

2.4

an ethnography named with author, group and place, e.g. Malinowski, Trobriand Islands, the Kula; similarity explained, e.g. both show exchange creating lasting relationships; difference explained, e.g. the Kula is ceremonial with no market price, while the yapa is part of commercial trade; concept used in the comparison

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Exercise 3.1

3.1 *(Paper 1 style.)* Using the concept of **exchange**, compare and contrast the ways in which relationships are created in the unseen text and in **one** ethnography you have studied. [15]



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3.1

Mark with the markbands: [13-15] clearly focused on the question, key concepts used accurately, ethnographic material in detail (author, place, group), different perspectives and theories evaluated, well-developed critical analysis, different perspectives evaluated, a reasoned conclusion; [10-12] focused, mostly accurate knowledge, analysis with some evaluation; [7-9] some focus, relevant knowledge, mostly narrative or description with limited analysis; [4-6] little focus, limited knowledge, mostly narrative; [1-3] little understanding of the question. Points that may be included: accurate use of the unseen text with short quotations; an ethnography in detail: author, group, place, date; concept of exchange explained: gift, reciprocity, market; Mauss on obligation to give, receive and repay; similarities explained; differences explained, e.g. commercial vs ceremonial, personal vs impersonal; change and power in both cases; a clear conclusion on what the comparison shows