1.2 Paper 1 skills: the unseen ethnographic text

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____ **Total: 30 marks**

KEY WORDS unseen text • exchange • reciprocity • gift • belonging

Objective

Build the **Paper 1** skills: read an **unseen ethnographic text**, describe what it shows, analyse it with **key concepts**, and compare it with an ethnography you have studied.

You must be able to:

- describe the people, place and practice in an unseen text
- analyse the text with one or two key concepts
- compare the text with an ethnography you have studied
- use precise evidence from the text
- plan a comparative answer

1 Key knowledge and worked examples

Unseen text (written for practice)

In a market town in the highlands, women sell vegetables from blankets on the ground. Each seller has regular customers, *caseras*, who always buy from her. She adds an extra potato or a handful of herbs, the *yapa*, to their bags. Buyers who are not *caseras* pay the same price but receive no *yapa*. Several sellers said that a supermarket opened last year "for people who do not know anyone". Younger buyers increasingly shop there.

How to answer

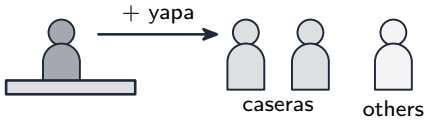
1. **Describe**: who, where, what practice; quote short phrases.
2. **Analyse**: apply a concept (e.g. *exchange*, *belonging*, *change*). Say what the practice *does* for people.
3. **Compare**: with an ethnography you know: author, group, place, and one similarity and one difference.

Worked analysis. The *yapa* turns a sale into a **relationship**: a small gift creates obligation and loyalty, so the customer returns. This links to Marcel Mauss' argument in *The Gift* (1925) that gifts create obligations to receive and to repay. The supermarket shows **change**: impersonal exchange ("for people who do not know anyone") is replacing personal ties.

2 Practice

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]



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

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

3 Exam-style questions

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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Solutions

Marking: **M1** a correct method, **A1** the correct answer, **B1** an independent mark.

Each answer shows the steps, then the **result**.

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

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

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

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

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

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