



# Anglais

Entraînement pas à pas 1 : valoriser sa pensée

## Le corrigé

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# 1 Articuler ses propos

## 1.1 Mise en pratique

### 1.1.1 Texte à trous

Vous trouverez ci-dessous le texte rempli. Il s'agit de propositions et des synonymes sont évidemment possibles.

## Thatcherism

By Dr Robert Pearce

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**First and foremost**, Margaret Hilda Thatcher (b 1925) has many claims to fame. She was our first woman prime minister. **Then**, she was premier for longer than anyone else in twentieth-century Britain, winning three successive election victories (in 1979, 1983 and 1987) and heading Conservative governments for a total of 11 years. She was **eventually** an extremely controversial figure, both idolized and vilified. **Interestingly enough**, she was the only premier to give her name to a set of political policies and attitudes. **Yet** what exactly is 'Thatcherism'?

### The economy

When Thatcher first became PM, her political allegiance was, of course, to Conservatism. The only other '-ism' to which she subscribed was 'monetarism' - the doctrine that inflation is caused by printing money and can be cured by restricting the money supply. Monetarists argued that, in the interests of efficiency, taxation should be kept low, state-controlled industry should be privatized, and free market forces be allowed to operate.

Such right-wing economic thinking was a major factor in Thatcherism but was not its essence.

**In point of fact**, Thatcher did not originate these ideas, and nor was she the first British politician to put them forward. **Furthermore**, her Chancellors were often keener monetarists and tax cutters than she. She privatized a swathe of British industry, beginning with British

Telecom in 1984, **nevertheless** such a policy had its precedents and she cautiously exempted the railways. **Similarly**, she sold council houses to their tenants but was not the first PM to adopt this policy and nor did she pursue it with the gusto of some of her ministers.

### **The ‘Nanny State’**

**As she once said** in 1981: ‘Economics is the method; the object is to change the soul.’ By rolling back the frontiers of the State - which stifled individual initiative - she **believed** that the genius of the British people would flourish. **Hence** her governments’ attempts at cutting back on welfare spending and refused to prop up ailing industries for the sake of avoiding unemployment. It was not governments which caused unemployment, insisted Thatcherites, it was the trade unions, whose demands for higher wages priced their members out of jobs. Thatcher **finally** defeated the long miners’ strike of 1984-85 and, in successive Acts of Parliament, curbed the power of the unions.

### **Battling Maggie**

‘I can’t bear Britain in decline, I just can’t’, Thatcher had insisted in 1979. Her aim was not just to reverse economic decline but to boost Britain’s stature in the world. Her chance came in 1982, with the Falklands war - a turning point in the construction of Thatcherism. Thereafter, she flamboyantly combated the centralising tendencies of the European Union (‘no, no, no’) and, alongside President Reagan, was a fierce critic of communism.

**Moreover** she achieved a high degree of personal dominance in Britain. She even began to use the ‘royal we’ (‘We are a grandmother’). Now she took on the miners. Now she took on the consensus-seeking ‘wets’ in her own cabinet - and was not above lambasting her own loyal colleagues, including the long-suffering Geoffrey Howe (‘more and more like a blancmange’). She was **indeed** ‘packaged’ for the media as the ‘Iron Lady’. Thatcherism became synonymous with confrontation.

‘What a superb creature she is, right and beautiful!’ gushed the poet Philip Larkin. Her great virtue, he said, ‘is saying that two and two make four, which is as unpopular nowadays as it

has always been'. To her detractors, **however**, she was adopting a presidential style and destroying cabinet government – **so that**, essentially, Thatcherism meant the cult of the leader.

### **Conclusion**

It seems clear that Thatcherism was not an ideology. Its ideas were neither original nor consistent. John Campbell has recently identified Thatcherism's main contradiction: she 'celebrated a culture of rampant materialism ... fundamentally at odds with her own values which were essentially conservative'.

**But** were Thatcher's policies particularly significant for Britain? 'I came into office with one deliberate intent: to change Britain from a dependent to a self-reliant society.' Did she do it? What overall effect did she have on the welfare state? Did she produce an economic miracle, a vigorous 'enterprise economy'? What of British culture? Did deregulation – **for instance**, with the Broadcasting Act of 1990, which pleased her most ardent admirer, the media tycoon Rupert Murdoch - provide greater consumer choice only at the cost of debasing standards? And what of Britain's position in the world? Did this latter-day Britannia really put the Great back in Britain?

On the answers to such questions will 'Thatcherism' stand or fall. At the moment, we probably lack the sense of perspective to judge fairly. Will Mrs Thatcher be admired by future historians? Or will Thatcherism be seen as no more than a rhetorical spasm of indignation at Britain's irreversible relative decline? If the latter, Thatcherism may be considered little more than the bombastic style of one remarkable but deluded woman and a concoction got up by the media to help sell tabloid newspapers, the political equivalent of a page three nude.

## **2 Rédiger avec précision**

A partir des notes suivantes, vous pouvez rédiger un résumé tel que celui que vous trouverez ensuite:

Margaret Thatcher: 11 years on Downing Street, thatcherism, loved and hated.

Thatcher: conservatism and monetarism.

Did not invent her political philosophy, fiercely privatised the country.

One of her mottos: "To roll back the frontiers of the State": free private initiative.

Thatcher: fight against the trade unions.

Will to restore Britain's grandeur: Falklands War, rejection of the European Union.

An overwhelming leader: lambasting her own colleagues: the Iron Lady.

Cult of the leader, destruction of cabinet government.

Materialism versus conservatism: Thatcher.

What about her long term influence and place in history?

*After 11 years on Downing Street, Margaret Thatcher, both loved and hated, lent her name to her policy. Today, Thatcherism is still synonymous with conservatism and monetarism and though she is not at the origin of the philosophy she used to follow, she nonetheless succeeded in fiercely privatizing her country. Besides, Thatcher advocated free initiative and notably thought fit to fight against unemployment, reducing the power of trade unions. A firm believer in the British citizens' own power to rise above their initial stations, she also believed in the grandeur of her country. Thus, she proved dangerously infallible in the Falklands War and she never consented to submit Britain to what she considered as the unacceptable conditions of the European Union. Margaret Thatcher was no doubt an overwhelming leader who was even feared in her own circles. Her personality owed her the telling nickname of "The Iron Lady" also hinting at that cult of the leader who, through sheer authority, threatened the Cabinet government. Controversial and ambiguous, divided noticeably between materialism and conservatism, critics keep studying Thatcherism, wondering sometimes what its traces in history will be.*

### 3 Nuancer ses propos

Vous trouverez ici une version plus nuancée, moins directe, plus politiquement correcte aussi du texte qui vous était proposé dans le sujet :

*Who are the long-term unemployed?*

*Long-term unemployed people are **less well-educated** than others – 49% did not reach year 12 compared with 41% of those unemployed for less than 12 months (ABS, 2011). Indigenous, **mature aged** and people with disabilities are all overrepresented amongst the long term unemployed.*

*Mature aged (over 45s) make up 34% of the unemployed and 46% of the long-term unemployed. In 2010-2011 33% of unemployed people aged 55-64 were long term unemployed.*

*Some locations have a much higher rate of long-term unemployment than others. These communities often have social, health, and infrastructure disadvantages which may require action on a range of fronts (DEEWR, 2009a).*

*Australia has a higher incidence of jobless households by international standards. However, **the vast majority (around 84%) of households** that have been jobless for a year or more are headed by single parents, and over half have a child under 6 years old (Social Inclusion Board, 2011).*

*Impact of long-term unemployment*

*Long-term unemployment is associated with **poor physical and mental health**, social isolation and poverty (Butterworth, 2009; Saunders, 2006). Workers who remain outside the workforce for some time find it **much harder** to re-enter – their skills **lose** currency and employers **tend to** screen them out in favour of people with more recent experience (an effect described as “hysteresis”) (Chapman & Kapuscinski, 2000).*

*Mature aged unemployment*

*Australia's labour force participation rate for **older** workers is less than many OECD countries – reflecting both voluntary early retirement and involuntary exit.*

*Discrimination by employers is **a key factor** impacting on **older** people's ability to secure and retain work (HREOC, 2010).*

***Poor** education levels, outdated skills, or skills associated with declining industries/occupations reduce employment prospects for mature aged job seekers. **Mature aged** workers are **less likely** to participate in vocational training and generally respond to different approaches to training (SPOEHR et al, 2009).*

*Australia's poor record in employing people with disabilities impacts on older workers who experience either age related or work related health conditions or injuries.*