

2 Reading Comprehension – Answer Key

Text: Gary Younge, “Mirth of a Nation”, from: Michael Mitchell, *Ethnic Diversity in the UK*, Viewfinder Topics (München: Langenscheidt, 2010), pp. 28-29.

B QUESTIONS AND TASKS

1. What is called “new inclusiveness” in the introduction is (tick only 1)

- ☐ a lot of new mixtures in order to make cocktail drinks.
- ☐ a certain mixture of musical styles.
- ☒ a new kind of youth culture which included influences from Asia, the U.S., the Caribbean.
- ☐ a new mainstream that was positively white.

2. *Goodness Gracious Me* was a successful show. (Tick the two correct statements)

- ☐ Its title could be played in stereo.
- ☒ Its title had to do with a song by Peter Sellers.
- ☐ It contained questionable prejudices and assumptions.
- ☒ Clichés and stereotypes were satirized.
- ☐ Sophia Loren was an Indian actor who sang a duet with Peter Sellers.

3. What did *Goodness Gracious Me* achieve on British TV? Refer to ll. 7-9.

The show proves that Asian and British culture can mix very successfully. It can also serve as an example of how humour can be used for political comment.

4. Decide whether the following statements about ll. 12–29 are true, false or not in the text.

	true	false	not in text
a) The genre “Asian Comedy” was completely new to British TV.	☒	☐	☐
b) The producer was not sure who would watch his show.	☒	☐	☐
c) Someone was shot in the dark.	☐	☒	☐
d) The show found its viewers even outside Britain.	☒	☐	☐
e) Its quality was considered debatable.	☐	☒	☐
d) The term “oil of race relations” was meant as a compliment.	☒	☐	☐
d) The British army uses the show for workshops on race-relations.	☐	☐	☒

5. What did Aimé Césaire write about the importance of humour (ll. 39-42)? Paraphrase.

Humour makes him aware of different, even opposite perspectives on all kinds of subjects. Humour gives him the freedom to think in totally new ways.

6. Which two statements about British Asians are true (ll.56-67)?
(Do not tick more than 2 options)

- ☒ The show's popularity is a sign that the second generation feels more at ease.
- ☐ It made Asians of the first generation protest against race attacks.
- ☐ It formed their experience as immigrants.
- ☐ It enabled their children to be less frustrated.
- ☒ The second generation usually feel more frustrated if not given their rights in the UK.

7. Give three examples that show the increasing acceptance of Asian culture in the UK.

music (“Asian band Cornershop”), fashion (“cropped sari tops in London clubs”), beauty (“bindis”)

8. What does Younge take as a symbol of Britain having “re-branded itself” (l. 82)?
(Do not tick more than 1 option)

- ☐ potent illustrations
- ☒ curry as a national dish
- ☐ club-goers swearing in Hindi
- ☐ white mainstream synonyms

9. Why does Younge use the expression “Goodness, gracious me” at the end of his text?

As the exclamation is rather an old-fashioned one, its use might be an allusion to the fact that especially older people are surprised that the British mainstream of society is no longer exclusively white, or that being surprised about British multi-ethnicity is a sign of being old-fashioned.

Alternatively:

It may simply be an echo, saying ‘Who would have thought this could have happened!’

(Peter Ringeisen)