



MINISTÈRE
DE L'ÉDUCATION
NATIONALE

EAE ANG 2

SESSION 2018

AGREGATION CONCOURS EXTERNE

Section : LANGUES VIVANTES ÉTRANGÈRES
ANGLAIS

COMMENTAIRE DE TEXTE EN ANGLAIS

Durée : 6 heures

L'usage de tout ouvrage de référence, de tout dictionnaire et de tout matériel électronique (y compris la calculatrice) est rigoureusement interdit..

Dans le cas où un(e) candidat(e) repère ce qui lui semble être une erreur d'énoncé, il (elle) le signale très lisiblement sur sa copie, propose la correction et poursuit l'épreuve en conséquence.

De même, si cela vous conduit à formuler une ou plusieurs hypothèses, il vous est demandé de la (ou les) mentionner explicitement.

NB : La copie que vous rendrez ne devra, conformément au principe d'anonymat, comporter aucun signe distinctif, tel que nom, signature, origine, etc. Si le travail qui vous est demandé comporte notamment la rédaction d'un projet ou d'une note, vous devrez impérativement vous abstenir de signer ou de l'identifier.

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Feeling the black-furred creature begin to stir, Emily let her thoughts move away from her eldest daughter and sent the tendrils of a worrying disposition out towards her youngest. Poor darling Briony, the softest little thing, doing her all to entertain her hard-bitten wiry cousins with the play she had written from her heart. To love her was to be
5 soothed. But how to protect her against failure, against that Lola, the incarnation of Emily's youngest sister who had been just as precocious and scheming at that age, and who had recently plotted her way out of a marriage, into what she wanted everyone to call a nervous breakdown. She could not afford to let Hermione into her thoughts. Instead, Emily, breathing quietly in the darkness, gauged the state of the household by
10 straining to listen. In her condition, this was the only contribution she could make. She rested her palm against her forehead, and heard another tick as the building shrank tighter. From far below came a metallic clang, a falling saucepan lid perhaps; the pointless roast dinner was in the earliest stages of preparation. From upstairs, the thud of feet on floorboards and children's voices, two or three at least, talking at once, rising,
15 falling, and rising again, perhaps in dissent, perhaps excited agreement. The nursery was on the floor above, and only one room along. *The Trials of Arabella*. If she were not so ill, she would go up now and supervise or help, for it was too much for them, she knew. Illness had stopped her giving her children all a mother should. Sensing this, they had always called her by her first name. Cecilia should lend a hand, but she was too wrapped
20 up in herself, too much the intellectual to bother with children . . . Emily successfully resisted the pursuit of this line, and seemed to drift away then, not quite into sleep, but out of thought into invalid nullity, and many minutes passed until she heard in the hallway outside her bedroom footfalls on the stairs, and by the muffled sound of them thought they must be barefoot and therefore Briony's. The girl would not wear her shoes
25 in the hot weather. Minutes later, from the nursery again, energetic scuffling and something hard rattling across the floorboards. The rehearsals had disintegrated, Briony had retreated in a sulk, the twins were fooling about, and Lola, if she was as much like her mother as Emily believed, would be tranquil and triumphant.

Habitual fretting about her children, her husband, her sister, the help, had rubbed
30 her senses raw; migraine, mother-love and, over the years, many hours of lying still on her bed, had distilled from this sensitivity a sixth sense, a tentacular awareness that reached out from the dimness and moved through the house, unseen and all-knowing.

35 Only the truth came back to her, for what she knew, she knew. The indistinct murmur of
voices heard through a carpeted floor surpassed in clarity a typed-up transcript; a
conversation that penetrated a wall or, better, two walls, came stripped of all but its
essential twists and nuances. What to others would have been a muffling was to her
alert senses, which were fine-tuned like the cat's whiskers of an old wireless, an almost
unbearable amplification. She lay in the dark and knew everything. The less she was able
to do, the more she was aware. But though she sometimes longed to rise up and
40 intervene, especially if she thought Briony was in need of her, the fear of pain kept her in
place. At worst, unrestrained, a matching set of sharpened kitchen knives would be
drawn across her optic nerve, and then again, with a greater downward pressure, and
she would be entirely shut in and alone. Even groaning increased the agony.

45 And so she lay there as the late afternoon slipped by. The front door had opened and
closed. Briony would have gone out with her mood, probably to be by water, by the pool,
or the lake, or perhaps she had gone as far as the river. Emily heard a careful tread on
the stairs – Cecilia at last taking the flowers up to the guest's room, a simple errand she
had been asked many times that day to perform. Then later, Betty calling to Danny, and
the sound of the trap on the gravel, and Cecilia going down to meet the visitors, and
50 soon, spreading through the gloom, the faintest tang of a cigarette – she had been asked
a thousand times not to smoke on the stairs, but she would be wanting to impress Leon's
friend, and that in itself might not be a bad thing. Voices echoing in the hall, Danny
struggling up with the luggage, and coming down again, and silence – Cecilia would have
taken Leon and Mr Marshall to the pool to drink the punch that Emily herself had made
55 that morning. She heard the scampering of a four-legged creature coming down the
stairs – the twins, wanting the pool and about to be disappointed that it had been taken
over.

Ian McEwan, *Atonement* [2001], London, Vintage, 2016, p. 65-67.

INFORMATION AUX CANDIDATS

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Concours	Section/option	Epreuve	Matière
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