

SESSION 2021

**AGRÉGATION
CONCOURS EXTERNE SPÉCIAL**

**Section : LANGUES VIVANTES ÉTRANGÈRES
ANGLAIS**

COMPOSITION

Durée : 7 heures

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

Vous rendrez deux copies distinctes pour chacune des deux parties du sujet que vous aurez choisi.

Si vous repérez ce qui vous semble être une erreur d'énoncé, vous devez le signaler très lisiblement sur votre copie, en proposer la correction et poursuivre l'épreuve en conséquence. De même, si cela vous conduit à formuler une ou plusieurs hypothèses, vous devez la (ou les) mentionner explicitement.

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

INFORMATION AUX CANDIDATS

Vous trouverez ci-après les codes nécessaires vous permettant de compléter les rubriques figurant en en-tête de votre copie.

Ces codes doivent être reportés sur chacune des copies que vous remettrez quel que soit le sujet choisi (civilisation ou littérature)

► **Composition en anglais (1^{ère} partie) :**

Concours	Section/option	Epreuve	Matière
EAD	0422A	101A	7411

► **2^{ème} composition (2^{ème} partie) :**

Concours	Section/option	Epreuve	Matière
EAD	0422A	101B	0313

Sujet de littérature

Première partie

Comment on the following text:

But his son hated him. He hated him for coming up to them, for stopping and looking down on them; he hated him for interrupting them; he hated him for the exaltation and sublimity of his gestures; for the magnificence of his head; for his exactingness and egotism (for there he stood, commanding them to attend to him) but most of all he hated the twang and twitter of his father's emotion which, vibrating round them, disturbed the perfect simplicity and good sense of his relations with his mother. By looking fixedly at the page, he hoped to make him move on; by pointing his finger at a word, he hoped to recall his mother's attention, which, he knew angrily, wavered instantly his father stopped. But, no. Nothing would make Mr. Ramsay move on. There he stood, demanding sympathy.

Mrs. Ramsay, who had been sitting loosely, folding her son in her arm, braced herself, and, half turning, seemed to raise herself with an effort, and at once to pour erect into the air a rain of energy, a column of spray, looking at the same time animated and alive as if all her energies were being fused into force, burning and illuminating (quietly though she sat, taking up her stocking again), and into this delicious fecundity, this fountain and spray of life, the fatal sterility of the male plunged itself, like a beak of brass, barren and bare. He wanted sympathy. He was a failure, he said. Mrs. Ramsay flashed her needles. Mr. Ramsay repeated, never taking his eyes from her face, that he was a failure. She blew the words back at him. "Charles Tansley..." she said. But he must have more than that. It was sympathy he wanted, to be assured of his genius, first of all, and then to be taken within the circle of life, warmed and soothed, to have his senses restored to him, his barrenness made fertile, and all the rooms of the house made full of life – the drawing-room; behind the drawing-room the kitchen; above the kitchen the bedrooms; and beyond them the nurseries; they must be furnished, they must be filled with life.

Charles Tansley thought him the greatest metaphysician of the time, she said. But he must have more than that. He must have sympathy. He must be assured that he too lived in the heart of life; was needed; not only here, but all over the world. Flashing her needles, confident, upright, she created drawing-room and kitchen, set them all aglow; bade him take his ease there, go in and out, enjoy himself. She laughed, she knitted. Standing between her knees, very stiff, James felt all her strength flaring up to be drunk and quenched by the beak of brass, the arid scimitar of the male, which smote mercilessly, again and again, demanding sympathy.

He was a failure, he repeated. Well, look then, feel then. Flashing her needles, glancing round about her, out of the window, into the room, at James himself, she assured him, beyond a shadow of a doubt, by her laugh, her poise, her competence (as a nurse carrying a light across a dark room assures a fractious child), that it was real; the house was full; the garden blowing. If he put implicit faith in her, nothing should hurt him; however deep he buried himself or climbed high, not for a second should he find himself without her. So boasting of her capacity to surround and protect, there was scarcely a shell of herself left for her to know herself by; all was so lavished and spent; and James, as he stood stiff between her knees, felt her rise in a rosy-flowered fruit tree laid with leaves and dancing boughs into which the beak of brass, the arid scimitar of his father, the egotistical man, plunged and smote, demanding sympathy.

Filled with her words, like a child who drops off satisfied, he said, at last, looking at her with humble gratitude, restored, renewed, that he would take a turn; he would watch the children playing cricket. He went.

Immediately, Mrs. Ramsay seemed to fold herself together, one petal closed in another, and the whole fabric fell in exhaustion upon itself, so that she had only strength enough to move her finger, in exquisite abandonment to exhaustion, across the page of Grimm's fairy story, while

there throbbed through her, like a pulse in a spring which has expanded to its full width and now gently ceases to beat, the rapture of successful creation.

50 Every throb of this pulse seemed, as he walked away, to enclose her and her husband, and to give to each that solace which two different notes, one high, one low, struck together, seem to give each other as they combine. Yet as the resonance died, and she turned to the Fairy Tale again, Mrs. Ramsay felt not only exhausted in body (afterwards, not at the time, she always felt this) but also there tinged her physical fatigue some faintly disagreeable sensation with another origin. Not that, as she read aloud the story of the Fisherman's Wife, she knew precisely what it came from; nor did she let herself put into words her dissatisfaction when she realized, at the turn of the page
55 when she stopped and heard dully, ominously, a wave fall, how it came from this: she did not like, even for a second, to feel finer than her husband; and further, could not bear not being entirely sure, when she spoke to him, of the truth of what she said. Universities and people wanting him, lectures and books and their being of the highest importance – all that she did not doubt for a moment; but it was their relation, and his coming to her like that, openly, so that anyone could see, that discomposed her; for then people said he depended on her, when they must know that of the
60 two he was infinitely the more important, and what she gave the world, in comparison with what he gave, negligible. But then again, it was the other thing too – not being able to tell him the truth, being afraid, for instance, about the greenhouse roof and the expense it would be, fifty pounds perhaps to mend it; and then about his books, to be afraid that he might guess, what she a little
65 suspected, that his last book was not quite his best book (she gathered that from William Bankes); and then to hide small daily things, and the children seeing it, and the burden it laid on them – all this diminished the entire joy, the pure joy, of the two notes sounding together, and let the sound die on her ear now with a dismal flatness.

A shadow was on the page; she looked up. It was Augustus Carmichael shuffling past,
70 precisely now, at the very moment when it was painful to be reminded of the inadequacy of human relationships, that the most perfect was flawed, and could not bear the examination which, loving her husband, with her instinct for truth, she turned upon it; when it was painful to feel herself convicted of unworthiness, and impeded in her proper function by these lies, these exaggerations, – it was at this moment when she was fretted thus ignobly in the wake of her exaltation, that Mr.
75 Carmichael shuffled past, in his yellow slippers, and some demon in her made it necessary for her to call out, as he passed,

‘Going indoors, Mr. Carmichael?’

Virginia WOOLF, *To The Lighthouse*, 1927. Ed. S. McNichol. London: Penguin Books, 1992, Part I “The Window”, 7, pp. 42-45.

Annexe 1

In her autobiographical writings in *Moments of Being*, [Woolf] describes the process of ‘scene making’ as her ‘natural way of marking the past’, ‘the origins of my writing impulse’. ‘Always a scene has arranged itself: representative, enduring.’ It might be her father sitting in a boat, reciting ‘we perished, each alone’, or her mother sitting by the window knitting while the children played cricket. These scenes are not codes, they do not ‘stand’ for something else. ‘Representative’ is not the same as ‘symbolic’. More obscurely, they provide the shapes that are the focal points for strong emotions. So the narrative [of *To the Lighthouse*] is made up of scenes which are constructed to centre around certain shapes. This is why the novel is so much about ways of looking [...] as when Lily looks along Mr Bankes’s ‘beam’ and adds to it ‘her different ray’, or when Mrs Ramsay observes Mr Carmichael looking at the fruit bowl: ‘That was his way of looking, different from hers. But looking together united them.’

Hermione Lee, ‘Introduction’, in Virginia Woolf, *To The Lighthouse*. Ed. S. McNichol. London: Penguin Books, 1992, p. xxii.

Annexe 2

Look within and life, it seems, is very far from being ‘like this’. Examine, for a moment, an ordinary mind on an ordinary day. The mind receives a myriad impressions – trivial, fantastic, evanescent, or engraved with the sharpness of steel. From all sides they come, an incessant shower of innumerable atoms; and as they fall, as they shape themselves into the life of Monday or Tuesday, the accent falls differently from of old; the moment of importance came not here but there; so that, if the writer were a free man and not a slave, if he could write what he chose, not what he must, if he could base his work upon his own feeling and not upon convention, there would be no plot, no comedy, no tragedy, no love interest or catastrophe in the accepted style, and perhaps not a single button sewn on as the Bond street tailors would have it. Life is not a series of gig-lamps symmetrically arranged; life is a luminous halo, a semi-transparent envelope surrounding us from the beginning of consciousness to the end. Is it not the task of the novelist to convey this varying, this unknown and uncircumscribed spirit, whatever aberration or complexity it may display, with as little mixture of the alien and the external as possible? We are not pleading merely for courage and sincerity; we are suggesting that the proper stuff of fiction is a little other than custom would have us believe it.

Virginia Woolf, “Modern Fiction”, 1925, in *The Crowded Dance of Modern Life*. Ed. Rachel Bowlby. London: Penguin Books, 1998, p. 8.

Annexe 3

Feminist and gender studies have recently analyzed the house for the complicity between architecture and gender. As a building and as an idea, the house has inextricable ties to women’s daily lives, their labor, their social place, and their identities. Working to untangle the connections between woman and fiction and, implicitly, between women and the domestic space that contains them, Woolf acknowledges that explaining these relationships poses an ‘unsolvable problem’.

Gendered representations of houses, writers, and fiction itself saturate her criticism of other writers, especially women writers, becoming sites wherein Woolf both appropriates and contests the specific legacies of Victorian femininity.

Emily Blair, *Virginia Woolf and the Nineteenth-Century Domestic Novel*, Albany (N.Y.), State University of New York Press, 2007, p. 11.

Deuxième partie

Traduire depuis « *Mr. Ramsay repeated...* » (l. 16) jusqu'à « *...demanding sympathy* » (l. 29).

Sujet de civilisation

Première partie

Comment on the following text:

5 Whilst serving my apprenticeship under Charles Booth¹, I had reached a tentative conclusion about the most far-reaching “experiment in the lives of other people” that the world had then witnessed; though it has since been equalled in ruthlessness, and excelled in speed and violence, but not, I think, in thoroughness and permanence, by the Russian Revolution that began in 1917.

10 The industrial revolution in Britain, which had its most intense phase in the latter end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century, cast out of our rural and urban life the yeoman cultivator and the copyholder, the domestic manufacturer and the independent handicraftsman, all of whom owned the instruments by which they earned their livelihood; and gradually substituted for them a relatively small body of capitalist *entrepreneurs* employing at wages an always multiplying mass of propertyless men, women and children, struggling like rats in a bag, for the right to live. This bold venture in economic reconstruction had now been proved to have been, so it seemed to me, at one and the same time, a stupendous success and a tragic failure. The accepted purpose of the pioneer of the new power-driven machine industry was the making of pecuniary profit; a purpose which had been fulfilled, as Dr. Johnson observed about his friend Thrale’s brewery, “beyond the dreams of avarice”. Commodities of all sorts and kinds rolled out from the new factories at an always accelerating speed with ever-falling costs of production, thereby promoting what Adam Smith had idealised as *The Wealth of Nations*. The outstanding success of this new system of industry was enabling Great Britain, through becoming the workshop of the world, to survive the twenty years’ ordeal of the Napoleonic Wars intact, and not even invaded, whilst her ruling oligarchy emerged in 1815 as the richest and most powerful government of the time.

25 On the other hand, that same revolution had deprived the manual workers – that is, four-fifths of the people of England – of their opportunity for spontaneity and freedom of initiative in production. It had transformed such of them as had been independent producers into hirelings and servants of another social class; and, as the East End of London in my time only too vividly demonstrated, it had thrust hundreds of thousands of families into the physical horrors and moral debasement of chronic destitution in crowded tenements in the midst of mean streets. There were, however, for the manual working class as a whole, certain compensations. The new organisation of industry had the merit of training the wage-earners in the art of team-work in manufacture, transport and trading. Even the oppressions and frauds of the capitalist profit-maker had their uses in that they drove the proletariat of hired men, which capitalism had made ubiquitous, to combine in Trade Unions and co-operative societies; and thus to develop their instinct of fellowship, and their capacity for representative institutions, alike in politics and industry. Moreover, the

¹ Charles Booth, (born March 30, 1840, Liverpool, Eng.—died Nov. 23, 1916, Whitwick, Leicestershire), English shipowner and sociologist whose *Life and Labour of the People in London*, 17 vol. (1889–91, 1892–97, 1902), contributed to the knowledge of social problems and to the methodology of statistical measurement.

40 contrast between the sweated workers of east London and the Lancashire textile
operatives made me realise how the very concentration of wage-earners in the
factory, the ironworks and the mine had made possible, in their cases, what the
sweater's workshop, the independent craftsman's forge and the out-worker's home
had evaded, namely, a collective regulation of the conditions of employment,
45 which, in the Factory Acts and Mines Regulation Acts on the one hand, and the
standard rates of wage and the normal working day of the Trade Unions on the other
hand, had, during the latter part of the nineteenth century, wrought so great an
improvement in the status of this regulated section of the World of Labour. It was,
in fact, exactly this collective regulation of the conditions of employment, whether
50 by legislative enactment or by collective bargaining, that had raised the cotton
operatives, the coal-miners and the workers of the iron trades into an effective
democracy; or, at least, into one which, in comparison with the entirely unorganised
workers of East London, was eager for political enfranchisement and education;
and which, as the chapels, the co-operative societies and the Trade Unions had
demonstrated, was capable of self-government. I wished to probe further this
55 contrast between the wage-earners who had enjoyed the advantages of collective
regulation and voluntary combinations, and those who had been abandoned to the
rigours of unrestrained individual competition. But I wanted also to discover
whether there was any practicable alternative to the dictatorship of the capitalist in
industry, and his reduction of all the other participants in production to the position
60 of subordinate "hands". For it was persistently asserted that there was such an
alternative. In this quest I did not turn to the socialists. *Fabian Essays* were still
unwritten and unpublished; and such socialists as I had happened to meet at the East
End of London belonged to the Social Democratic Federation, and were at the time
preaching what seemed to me nothing but a catastrophic overturning of the existing
65 order, by forces of whose existence I saw no sign, in order to substitute what
appeared to me the vaguest of incomprehensible utopias.

There was, however, another alternative lauded by idealists of all classes: by
leading Trade Unionists and the more benevolent employers, by revolutionary
socialists and by Liberal and Conservative philanthropists: an experiment in
70 industrial organisation actually, so it was reported, being brought into operation on
a small scale by enthusiastic working men themselves. This was the ideal of "self-
employment", and the peaceful elimination from industry of the capitalist
entrepreneur; to be secured by the manual workers themselves acquiring the
ownership, or at any rate the use, of the capital, and managing the industry by which
75 they gained their livelihood. It was this ideal, so I was told, that animated the Co-
operative Movement in the north of England and the Lowlands of Scotland – a
movement barely represented in the London that I knew.

There were, however, drawbacks to such a scheme of enquiry. It entailed breaking
away from my fellow-workers in London, thus sacrificing skilled guidance and
80 stimulating companionship. Further, I doubted whether I had the capacity and
training to undertake, unaided, an enquiry into what was, after all, a particular form
of business enterprise. Would it not be wiser to follow up one of the many questions
opened out by Charles Booth's skilfully planned and statistically framed
exploration of industrial London?

Beatrice Webb, 'Chapter VII: Why I Became a Socialist', *My Apprenticeship*,
New York & London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1926, pp. 393-396.

Annexe 1

It is customary to regard Beatrice Potter's investigative work during the late 1880s from a biographical perspective, as, indeed, she encouraged us to do in *My Apprenticeship*. Beatrice became a major figure and her early intellectual development is important because of her later influence on policy and opinion. (...) There is, however, another context in which her work should be set and that is the world of social investigation in the 1880s which was to a great extent that of Charles Booth and his team. (...) This is the period when Beatrice metamorphosed from a middle-class philanthropic worker (a guise with which she had always felt somewhat uncomfortable) into a social investigator. Nevertheless, the late 1880s represented for her, in a sense, an apprenticeship for a type of work she ultimately did not pursue. For, in the end, she became not a social investigator/reformer on the Booth model (concerned to provide snap shots of the social problem) but a much more historically aware student of social institutions as well as a socialist activist.

Rosemary O'Day, 'Before the Webbs: Beatrice Potter's Early Investigations for Charles Booth's Inquiry', *History*, Vol. 78, No. 253 (June 1993), pp. 240-241.

Annexe 2

The Fabian Socialists (*Fabian Essays*, 1889) gave stress to a gradualist, bureaucratic, elitist and reformist agenda. Founded in 1884, the Fabian Society took the name from a Roman general reputed to have worn his enemies down by steady and determined resistance rather than large-scale battles. Comprising intellectuals like Beatrice and Sydney Webb (...), it placed great stress on the future role of a trained managerial class of experts dedicated to bureaucratic efficiency, recruited meritocratically, introducing reforms gradually and by rational argument, and supportive of democracy in the workplace as well as in politics. (...) All Fabians agreed that the state under socialism would embody the collective wisdom and organization of society dedicated to serving the general good. Fabianism thus retained a substantial political emphasis in contrast to a markedly anti-partisan and anti-political emphasis in many other forms of nineteenth century socialism.

Gregory Claeys, 'Political Thought', in Chris Williams (ed.), *A Companion to Nineteenth-Century Britain*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2007, pp. 197-198.

Annexe 3

The Factory Act of 1833 sought to establish a regular and limited working day for children who worked in textile factories. (...) These limitations seem minimal at best to twenty-first century eyes, but at the time they were a significant limitation on working hours and a demand that factory owners take responsibility for their workers' well-being. More broadly, the Factory Acts were an attempt to temper the excesses of *laissez-faire* capitalism with state responsibility for the health of all Britons. Over the course of the century many more Factory Acts would be passed, which applied limits to women's work, further limited working hours, and required that child workers be educated. Adult male workers remained relatively unprotected and continued to work very long hours and through the night. (...) Factory Acts were poorly enforced, but their passage indicates the commitment of liberal Victorian Britain to at least some degree of protection for those workers seen as most vulnerable.

Susie L. Steinbach, *Understanding the Victorians: Politics, Culture and Society in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (second edition), London & New York: Routledge, (2012), 2017, p. 46.

Annexe 4

The development of trade unions reflected the growing industrialisation and unification of the economy, the growth of larger concerns employing more people, and, by the end of the century, a new, more adversarial and combative working-class consciousness. The Trades Unions Congress (TUC), a federation of trade unions, began in 1868, unionism spread from the skilled craft section to semi-skilled and unskilled workers, and there were major strikes in the London gasworks and docks in 1888-9.

Jeremy Black and Donald M. Macraird, *Nineteenth-Century Britain*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003, p. 164.

Deuxième partie

Traduire depuis « *It had transformed...* » (ligne 27) jusqu'à « *...a collective regulation of the conditions of employment* » (ligne 43).