

**CAPES/CAFEP EXTERNE D'ANGLAIS SESSION 2014**

**EPREUVE DE MISE EN SITUATION PROFESSIONNELLE**

**Première partie :**

Vous procéderez à la présentation, à l'étude et à la mise en relation des trois documents proposés (A, B, C non hiérarchisés).

**Deuxième partie :**

Cette partie de l'épreuve porte sur les documents A et C.

A partir de ces supports, vous définirez des objectifs communicationnels, culturels et linguistiques pouvant être retenus dans une séquence pédagogique en cycle terminal, en vous référant aux programmes. En vous appuyant sur la spécificité de ces supports, vous dégagerez des stratégies pour développer les compétences de communication des élèves.

## Document A

It was on a dreary night of November that I beheld the accomplishment of my toils. With an anxiety that almost amounted to agony, I collected the instruments of life around me, that I might infuse a spark of being into the lifeless thing that lay at my feet. It was already one in the morning; the rain pattered dismally against the panes, and my candle was nearly burnt out, when, by the glimmer of the half-extinguished light, I saw the dull yellow eye of the creature open; it breathed hard, and a convulsive motion agitated its limbs.

How can I describe my emotions at this catastrophe, or how delineate the wretch whom with such infinite pains and care I had endeavoured to form? His limbs were in proportion, and I had selected his features as beautiful. Beautiful! – Great God! His yellow skin scarcely covered the work of muscles and arteries beneath; his hair was of a lustrous black, and flowing; his teeth of a pearly whiteness; but these luxuriances only formed a more horrid contrast with his watery eyes, that seemed almost of the same colour as the dun white sockets in which they were set, his shrivelled complexion and straight black lips.

The different accidents of life are not so changeable as the feelings of human nature. I had worked hard for nearly two years, for the sole purpose of infusing life into an inanimate body. For this I had deprived myself of rest and health. I had desired it with an ardour that far exceeded moderation; but now that I had finished, the beauty of the dream vanished, and breathless horror and disgust filled my heart. Unable to endure the aspect of the being I had created, I rushed out of the room, and continued a long time traversing my bedchamber, unable to compose my mind to sleep. At length lassitude succeeded to the tumult I had before endured; and I threw myself on the bed in my clothes, endeavouring to seek a few moments of forgetfulness. But it was in vain: I slept, indeed, but I was disturbed by the wildest dreams. I thought I saw Elizabeth, in the bloom of health, walking in the streets of Ingolstadt. Delighted and surprised, I embraced her; but as I imprinted the first kiss on her lips, they became livid with the hue of death; her features appeared to change, and I thought that I held the corpse of my dead mother in my arms; a shroud enveloped her form, and I saw the grave-worms crawling in the folds of the flannel. I started from my sleep with horror; a cold dew covered my forehead, my teeth chattered, and every limb became convulsed: when, by the dim and yellow light of the moon, as it forced its way through the window shutters, I beheld the wretch – the miserable monster whom I had created. He held up the curtain of the bed; and his eyes, if eyes they may be called, were fixed on me. His jaws opened, and he muttered some inarticulate sounds, while a grin wrinkled his cheeks. He might have spoken, but I did not hear; one hand was stretched out, seemingly to detain me, but I escaped, and rushed down stairs. I took refuge in the courtyard belonging to the house which I inhabited; where I remained during the rest of the night, walking up and down in the greatest agitation, listening attentively, catching and fearing each sound as if it were to announce the approach of the demoniacal corpse to which I had so miserably given life.

Oh! no mortal could support the horror of that countenance. A mummy again endued with animation could not be so hideous as that wretch. I had gazed on him while unfinished; he was ugly then; but when those muscles and joints were rendered capable of motion, it became a thing such as even Dante could not have conceived.

I passed the night wretchedly. Sometimes my pulse beat so quickly and hardly that I felt the palpitation of every artery; at others, I nearly sank to the ground through languor and extreme weakness. Mingled with this horror, I felt the bitterness of disappointment; dreams that had been my food and pleasant rest for so long a space were now become a hell to me; and the change was so rapid, the overthrow so complete!

## Document B

### 2.1 Of the passion caused by the sublime

The passion caused by the great and sublime in nature, when those causes operate most powerfully, is Astonishment; and astonishment is that state of the soul, in which all its motions are suspended, with some degree of horror. In this case the mind is so  
 5 entirely filled with its object, that it cannot entertain any other, nor by consequence reason on that object which employs it. Hence arises the great power of the sublime, that far from being produced by them, it anticipates our reasonings, and hurries us on by an irresistible force. Astonishment, as I have said, is the effect of the sublime in its highest degree; the inferior effects are admiration, reverence and respect.

### 10 2.2 Terror

No passion so effectually robs the mind of all its power of acting and reasoning as fear. For fear being an apprehension of pain or death, it operates in a manner that resembles actual pain. Whatever therefore is terrible, with regard to sight, is sublime too, whether this cause of terror, be endued with greatness of dimensions or not; for it  
 15 is impossible to look on any thing as trifling, or contemptible, that may be dangerous. There are many animals, who though far from being large, are yet capable of raising ideas of the sublime, because they are considered as objects of terror. As serpents and poisonous animals of almost all kinds. And to things of great dimensions, if we annex an adventitious idea of terror, they become without comparison greater. A level plain  
 20 of a vast extent on land, is certainly no mean idea; the prospect of such a plain may be as extensive as a prospect of the ocean; but can it ever fill the mind with any thing so great as the ocean itself? This is owing to several causes, but it is owing to none more than this, that the ocean is an object of no small terror. Indeed terror is in all cases whatsoever, either more openly or latently the ruling principle of the sublime. (...)

### 25 2.3 Obscurity

To make any thing very terrible, obscurity seems in general to be necessary. When we know the full extent of any danger, when we can accustom our eyes to it, a great deal of the apprehension vanishes. Every one will be sensible of this, who considers how  
 30 greatly night adds to our dread, in all cases of danger, and how much the notions of ghosts and goblins, of which none can form clear ideas, affect minds, which give credit to the popular tales concerning such sorts of beings. Those despotic governments, which are founded on the passions of men, and principally upon the passion of fear, keep their chief as much as may be from the public eye. The policy has been the same in many cases of religion. Almost all the heathen temples were  
 35 dark. Even in the barbarous temples of the Americans at this day, they keep their idol in a dark part of the hut, which is consecrated to his worship. For this purpose too the druids performed all their ceremonies in the bosom of the darkest woods, and in the shade of the oldest and most spreading oaks. (...)

Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (1757)

Document C



Joseph Wright of Derby, *An Experiment on a Bird in the Air-Pump*, 1768  
Oil on canvas, London, National Gallery.

## Sujet : EMSP 23

### Première partie en anglais

Dans la présentation du dossier, il convenait de préciser la nature, la période et le thème de chacun des documents. Ceux-ci pouvaient être abordés ainsi :

*Document A is an excerpt from Mary Shelley's novel Frankenstein, or the Modern Prometheus, published in 1818: the scene depicts the stormy night when the creature comes to life under the horrified eyes of the scientist. Document B is taken from Edmund Burke's A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful: in this passage, Burke suggests that the sublime in nature arouses feelings of fear and terror, often occurring in dark settings. Document C is a 1768 painting by Joseph Wright of Derby, depicting a scientific experiment in which a jar is emptied of its air by means of an air-pump, while a bird inside the jar starts suffocating. All three documents revolve around the questions of science and knowledge, and can be related to the notion of progress. If human reason may appear triumphant in document C, it also proves vulnerable in documents A and B. The dossier thus triggers a reflection on the limits of science: does science necessarily involve a form of progress for mankind? Another notion that might have been chosen to analyse this set of documents is that of "myths and heroes", as the figure of the scientist, in documents A and C, is evocative of archetypes (e.g. the figure of the mad scientist) and religious or mythological figures (e.g. the Titan Prometheus, in document A). The analysis suggested here will examine how the dossier questions the place and limits of human science in or around the age of the Enlightenment. The analysis will first tackle the imagery of light and darkness and its symbolism, typical of the Gothic genre; then study how the three documents envision the relationship between man and nature. A last part will examine the place of science as it relates to religion and myth.*

[// The imagery and symbolism of light and darkness]

*Shelley's Frankenstein is an archetypal example of the Gothic genre, and the passage under study creates a particularly gloomy setting for the birth of the creature, playing on the strong contrast between light and darkness – the artificial light of the candle and its "glimmer of [...] half-extinguished light" (l. 5) and the "dim and yellow light of the moon, as it forced its way through the window shutters" (l. 30). In this respect, the similarities between this passage and the painting by Wright of Derby are manifest: here, the scene also takes place at night, and parts of the room are plunged in darkness, while the centre of the picture, where the experiment is on display, is illuminated by a glowing light – interestingly, though, the source of light is invisible, hidden by a jar, or possibly emanating from the jar itself, almost supernaturally. As in Frankenstein, an ominous-looking moonlight is visible through the window; and the gesture of the young boy, on the right-hand side, is ambiguous: is he closing the curtain, to keep this disquieting spectacle at bay?*

*Edmund Burke, in document B, provides an articulation between obscurity and ignorance, thus pointing to the traditional symbolism of light and darkness. For Burke, terror arises when man's intellectual faculties are blurred, a situation fostered by dark settings: "To make any thing very terrible, obscurity seems in general to be necessary" (doc. B, l. 26). Conversely, light and clarity are associated with knowledge: "When we know the full extent of any danger [...] a great deal of the apprehension vanishes" (l. 26-27) and "how much the notions of*

ghosts and goblins, of which none can form clear ideas, affect minds” (l. 30). In the latter example, Burke hints at the budding genre of the Gothic, with the reference to “ghosts and goblins” (l. 30) and “popular tales” (l. 31): the Enlightenment intellectual here casts a scornful glance at a literary genre that was to become increasingly popular in the later decades of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. For Burke, obscurity is almost synonymous with obscurantism, as he shows how superstitious beliefs are fuelled by dark settings (l. 34-38).

In all three documents, light and darkness also have to do with the sense of sight: what one fears is what one sees – or what one does not see. Both in *Frankenstein* and in Wright of Derby’s painting, characters avert their glances from a terrifying spectacle: the scientist is “unable to endure the aspect of the being [he has] created” (l. 18), while a little girl, on the right-hand side of the picture, hides her face from the suffocating bird. For Burke, the “sight” (l. 13) of some natural spectacles is awe-inspiring. All three documents actually offer settings where the frontier between light and darkness, the visible and the invisible, is blurred – particularly so in *Frankenstein*, where the notion of confusion and imprecision is ubiquitous (through the recurrence of the modal “may”, for instance: “if eyes they may be called”, l. 31 ; “he might have spoken”, l. 32 ; or terms like “inarticulate”, l. 32 or “seemingly”, l. 33).

Through the symbolism of light and darkness, the three documents provide a reflection on man’s relationship with nature.

[II/ Man vs. nature, reason vs. imagination and passion]

*Frankenstein* displays a scene in which human knowledge defies the laws of nature: the creature to which Victor Frankenstein gives birth is literally super-natural, as it is created artificially, out of parts of human corpses. This hybrid being also defies reason and knowledge: repeatedly, the scientist fails to describe it (“How can I describe my emotions [...], or how delineate the wretch...?”, l. 7). A tell-tale sign of this confusion is the hesitation as to the pronouns Frankenstein uses to refer to the monster (“it breathed hard”, l. 6, but “his limbs were in proportion”, l. 8). Paradoxically, though, this challenge to natural laws backfires on the scientist, as the creature turns against its creator: Frankenstein loses control over his creation, and can only contemplate, helplessly, the consequences of his deeds. His reason is gradually overcome by his imagination, giving shape to irrational dreams and fears (l. 22-27).

The vulnerability of man in front of nature is also perceptible in Burke’s reflection on the sublime. The spectacle of the sublime in nature robs reason of its functions, leaving the mind in a state of paralysis: “No passion so effectually robs the mind of all its power of acting and reasoning as fear” (l. 11). Animals such as “serpents”, or large natural bodies like the “ocean” leave man in a position of inferiority, as his reason seems unable to make sense of them. Man’s passivity is, here again, underlined: “Hence the great power of the sublime, that far from being produced by them, it anticipates our reasonings, and hurries us on by an irresistible force” (l. 6-8).

Only in the painting is man’s superiority over nature fully displayed. The little bird is trapped in the jar, metaphorically enclosed and controlled by human science. The left hand of the scientist is symbolically placed at the top of the picture, and the pyramidal structure of the scene evokes of a hierarchy in which man as a rational being occupies the highest rank. A parallel can be drawn between the scientist and the little girls’ father, to his left, also using his hand to explain the experiment to his daughters, whose young age prevents them from understanding the superior interest of science. The implication is that the children are

governed by their fear and empathy for the bird, while their father embodies the dispassionate authority of reason.

All three documents finally provide a reflection on the relation between science and religion or myth, and call into the question the progress entailed by science.

[III/ Science vs. religion and myth: a reflection on the limits of scientific progress]

The excerpt from Frankenstein abounds in allusions to religion and mythology. The very subtitle of the novel, “the modern Prometheus”, is here echoed by the “spark of being” (l. 3) Frankenstein infuses into his creature. Like the Titan of Greek mythology, who stole fire from the gods in order to give it to man, the scientist commits a transgression by usurping a divine prerogative, which is to create life (here metaphorically associated with fire and light). This notion of creation equates the scene with a form of genesis, and thus also carries Biblical echoes. The word “hell” (l. 45) and the allusion to Dante’s Inferno (l. 41) suggest that Frankenstein shall be punished for this transgression, just as Prometheus in the Greek myth was for his hubris. The reference to Prometheus associates science with progress, but Shelley also shows how man’s insatiable thirst for knowledge can lead to dangerous extremes.

Wright of Derby’s painting, on the other hand, reactivates the codes of religious painting to stage the triumph of Enlightenment science. The use of chiaroscuro and the composition of the picture evoke classic religious scenes, reminiscent of painters such as Caravaggio or Georges de la Tour, suggesting that science provokes the same kind of awe as religion. The little bird in the jar may evoke a dove, which, in Christian imagery, is a symbol of the Holy Ghost: in this respect, the painting can be interpreted as the symbolic “suffocation” of religion under the power of human reason. Another reading, though, could emphasise the darker side of this scene: the dishevelled appearance of the scientist, his almost hallucinated look as he stares out of the painting at the spectator in a mise en abyme, give the impression that he is a prestidigitator performing a strange ritual, a mad scientist just like Frankenstein or the “druids” mentioned in document B, presiding over a mesmerizing and unsettling “ceremony” (doc. B, l. 37). By staring at the spectator, the scientist seems to challenge him/her to reflect upon the limits of science: should the experiment continue or stop? Does the quest for knowledge legitimate the cruel treatment of the little bird? As in Frankenstein, man’s Promethean aspirations are thus dramatized and questioned.

## **Seconde partie : proposition de pistes d’exploitation didactique et pédagogique**

La seconde partie de l’épreuve portait sur les documents A et C. Il s’agissait pour les candidats de proposer des pistes d’exploitation pédagogique pour le cycle terminal du lycée.

La première partie de l’épreuve doit alimenter la réflexion didactique et orienter le choix de l’entrée culturelle du cycle concerné. La spécificité des documents et leur potentiel littéraire analysés en amont rendent possible une exploitation en Littérature Etrangère en Langue Etrangère ou en LV1/ Langue Vivante Approfondie – les candidats doivent effectuer un choix et le justifier. Aussi la séquence pouvait s’inscrire dans une thématique (LELE) : « le personnage, ses figures, ses avatars » ou dans une notion (LV1/LVA) : « mythes et héros » et/ou « l’idée de progrès ».

Le jury a accepté toutes les propositions de pistes d’exploitation lorsque les activités langagières ciblées et les objectifs présentés s’inscrivaient dans une progression cohérente

pour une classe de Première ou de Terminale, correspondaient aux descripteurs du niveau visé (B2 en LV1 et LELE LV1, C1 en LVA) et permettaient aux candidats de dégager des stratégies transférables d'accès aux contenus culturels, littéraires et linguistiques et à l'implicite des documents.

Il était donc attendu des candidats qu'ils prennent en compte la spécificité des documents et proposent des outils pour permettre une analyse graduée des supports. Document A : il ne peut s'agir en cycle terminal de la seule vérification des éléments compris (dans un questionnement frontal centré sur les *WH- questions*) sans proposition convaincante pour aider les élèves à percevoir l'implicite, les stratégies narratives, le genre gothique de l'extrait, le point de vue et la focalisation. Document C : on ne peut se contenter ici de la seule description du tableau sans analyse fine de sa composition (construction pyramidale avec la figure triomphante du scientifique marionnettiste / apprenti-sorcier, triomphe de l'esprit, de la science expérimentale et des Lumières, clair-obscur et autres jeux de contrastes marqués), de sa trame narrative et de ses influences (Le Caravage, Georges de La Tour, Gerrit van Honthorst, les Lumières, le positivisme, la peinture religieuse). Les meilleurs candidats auront, par exemple, proposé un travail progressif sur le regard et la modalisation dans le document A ou la mise en abyme dans le document C, et mis en parallèle les spectateurs de l'expérience scientifique présentée dans le tableau dont nous sommes également spectateurs, d'une part, et les lecteurs de l'extrait gothique, d'autre part.

Quels que soient les objectifs linguistiques et activités langagières retenus, il était attendu des candidats qu'ils proposent des situations de communication qui rendent les élèves acteurs de leur apprentissage (repérages différents, déficit d'information, inter-questionnement, par exemple).

Pour les activités langagières de réception (compréhension de l'écrit), il était indispensable que les candidats proposent des stratégies d'accès au sens qui soient transférables d'un document à l'autre (réseaux lexicaux, sentiments et réactions des spectateurs / lecteurs, structure narrative, modalisation et incertitude propres au genre gothique, structures emphatiques et genre de l'excès, par exemple).

Il était par ailleurs attendu des candidats qu'ils puissent expliquer la hiérarchisation des documents. Après avoir identifié les obstacles et mesuré les difficultés (lexique de l'analyse picturale, compréhension et description de l'expérience scientifique représentée dans le tableau, archaïsmes dans l'extrait de *Frankenstein*), les candidats pouvaient ainsi justifier l'entrée dans la séquence par l'un ou l'autre des documents.

Les candidats qui ont proposé des documents passerelles et/ou des tâches intermédiaires cohérentes pour faciliter l'accès au sens et des activités différenciées qui prenaient en compte l'hétérogénéité du groupe (notamment en LELE enseignement obligatoire de la série Littéraire, qui n'entre pas dans la mise en place des groupes de compétences) ont été valorisés.

Lorsqu'une tâche finale était évoquée, il était indispensable qu'elle s'inscrive dans une démarche cohérente en lien avec la problématique et la notion/thématique choisies. Quelle que soit l'activité langagière de production retenue, elle devait procéder d'un choix réfléchi et argumenté. En lien avec ce choix, il était attendu des candidats qu'ils n'occultent pas l'enrichissement et la complexification progressifs de l'expression visée au niveau B2. Les candidats ont souvent privilégié le renforcement de la compétence d'expression écrite et proposé des stratégies qui permettent de passer de la réception à la production. Il pouvait s'agir ici d'une écriture d'invention avec changement de point de vue (narration à la première personne, entrée de journal intime : l'élève est un personnage du tableau). Si les candidats



ont privilégié la production orale, on pouvait penser ici à un concours de mise en scène photographique autour du tableau de Wright of Derby au cours duquel les élèves seraient amenés à justifier leur choix de mise en scène.

Enfin ont été valorisés les candidats qui ont pensé à des prolongements thématiques à partir de documents supplémentaires qui faisaient le lien entre science et éthique, science et fiction, science et art, par exemple, et ont inscrit les supports dans des problématiques contemporaines plus larges pour amener les élèves à exprimer une réflexion exigeante et aboutie (science et progrès pour la série scientifique, par exemple ; *hubris* et héros tragique ; personnage du scientifique et mythe de Prométhée pour la série littéraire). Ont pu être évoqués ici des extraits de *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (Stevenson) ou *Dracula* (Stoker) utilisés comme documents modélisants pour la tâche finale ; l'étude d'écrits de Wells, Huxley ou Asimov pouvait amorcer un travail sur l'évolution du personnage du savant fou dans la littérature et au cinéma.

Eva Loechner et Emilie Vasse