

SUJET SORTI

BACCALAURÉAT GÉNÉRAL

SESSION 2007

ANGLAIS – LVI

Séries ES-S

Durée : 3 heures - Coefficient 3

L'usage des calculatrices et de tout dictionnaire est interdit.

Barème appliqué pour la correction

<i>Compréhension écrite</i>	<i>10 points</i>
<i>Expression</i>	<i>10 points</i>

Ce sujet comporte 4 pages.

The story is set in the nineteenth century, before the American Civil War.

When she saw the books the tall slave named Grace straightened and asked if I would like a
ewer¹ of warm water for my toilet before she showed me to the master's room. I had shaved by
the river that morning before I'd made my crossing, but I was pleased at the chance for a hot
wash. When Grace returned, she said the master bade me to bring the books and leave the
rest. She led the way through the narrow hall that joined the kitchen, warming room, and
buttery to the cool expanse of the main house. The house was not especially large, nor by any
means the grandest I had been in—some of the plantation homes along the James² were more
like palaces—but it was perfect in proportion and exquisite in appointments.

Grace gestured with her long-fingered hand – not hands that appeared much accustomed to
heavy chores, I noted—indicating I should sit upon a marble bench. “That is the master's library.
He will be with you presently,” Grace said, and swept away to her duties.

The home's massive entrance was to my right, the wide door surrounded by lights of
beveled glass, and I sat there, watching the golden morning sunshine fracture into tiny
rainbows. Because I had been staring into the bright light, I could not see him well when he at
last opened the library door, for he stood in its shadow. There was an impression only; of great
height, very erect bearing, and a mellow voice.

“Good day to you, sir. Would you kindly come in?”

I entered and I stopped and twirled as if I were on a pivot. It was a double-height room, with
a narrow gallery at the midpoint. Books lined every inch of it. A very large, plain, and beautiful
rosewood desk stood in the center.

“Augustus Clement”, he said, holding out his hand. I shifted the weight of the books into the
crook of my left arm and shook his hand absently, for I was transfixed by the magnitude of his
collection. “I've always imagined paradise as something like a library. Now I know what it looks
like.” I barely realized I had spoken aloud, but Mr. Clement laughed and clapped me on the
shoulder.

“We get a few of you men through here, or we used to, before my daughter married. I think
she just liked to talk to young men, actually. But I've never come across one of you with an
interest in books. Set them down there, would you?”

I placed them on the rosewood desk, and he worked briskly through the pile. Now that I had
seen the magnitude of his library, I doubted he would find anything of interest to him. But the
Lavater *Physiognomy* caught his eye. “This is a later edition than the one I have; I am curious
to see his revisions. Tell Grace what you require for it and she will see to your payment.”

“Sir, I don't sell the books for cash.”

“Oh?”

“I trade for them—barter³—a book for a book, you know. That way I keep myself in something
fresh to read along the journey.”

“Do you so! Capital idea!” he said. “Though no way to make a profit.”

“I am interested in money, of course sir; it is necessary for a young man in my circumstances
to be so. But I trust you will not think me irresponsible if I tell you I am more interested in laying
up the riches of the mind⁴.”

“Well said, young Mr.—March, was it? Well, as it happens I have business elsewhere this day,
so why don't you make yourself free of the library. Do us the honor of taking dinner here, and
you can tell me then what volume you would consider in barter for the Lavater.”

“Sir, I could not impose upon you—”

“Mr. March, you would be doing me a great kindness. My household is reduced, at present.
My son is away with my manager on business. Solitude is no friend to science. You must know

¹ ewer: container for liquids

² the James: river

³ barter: exchange merchandise for merchandise without using money

⁴ laying up the riches of the mind: accumulating cultural knowledge

50 that we in the South suffer from a certain malnourishment of the mind: we value the art of conversation over literary pursuits, so that when we gather together it is all for gallantries and pleasure parties. There is much to be said for our agrarian way of life. But sometimes I envy your bustling⁵ Northern cities, where men of genius are thrown together thick as bees, and the honey of intellectual accomplishment is produced. I would like to talk about books with you; do be kind enough to spare me an evening."

"Mr. Clement, sir, it would be my very great pleasure."

55 "Very good, then. I shall look forward."

By afternoon, I could say I was ready to love Mr. Clement. For to know a man's library is, in some measure, to know his mind.

⁵ bustling: noisy and busy

Abridged and adapted from *March*, Geraldine Brooks, 2005

I. COMPRÉHENSION

NOTE IMPORTANTE AUX CANDIDATS :

Les candidats traiteront le sujet **sur la copie qui leur sera fournie** en respectant l'**ordre des questions** et en faisant apparaître la **numérotation** (numéro et lettre repère le cas échéant, ex: 15b - **voir en particulier les questions 1, 4, 5, 8, 9 et 10**). Ils composeront des phrases complètes chaque fois qu'il leur est demandé de rédiger les réponses. **Le nombre de mots** indiqué constitue une exigence minimale. En l'absence d'indication, les candidats répondront brièvement à la question posée. Les **citations** seront limitées aux éléments **pertinents** et précédées de la mention de la ligne.

1. Grace, Mr. March, Augustus Clement are characters in the story.

a) Which one is the narrator?

b) How are the other two related?

2. In whose house does the scene take place?

3. In what part of the US is the scene set?

Quote two elements from the text to justify your answer.

4. True or False? Justify your answer each time with a quotation from the text.

The narrator

a) is an elderly person.

b) feels welcomed.

c) gets a favourable impression of the house.

Questions 5 and 6. Focus on the passage from line 1 to line 29.

5. a) Which room do the two men meet in?

b) What effect does the room have on Mr. March? (20 words) Justify your answer with a quotation.

6. lines 25-26: "Mr. Clement laughed and clapped me on the shoulder."

Among the following adjectives, choose the one that best describes Mr. Clement's feelings at that moment.

aggressive, disappointed, distrustful, enthusiastic, indifferent, puzzled

Explain why the character feels that way and find a quotation to support your view.

Questions 7 and 8. Focus on the passage from line 30 to line 37.

7. What do the underlined pronouns refer to?

line 30: "I placed them on the rosewood desk"

line 33: "Tell Grace what you require for it"

line 36: "I trade for them"

8. a) What does Mr. Clement think Mr. March has come for?

b) Is he right in thinking so? (20 words)

Questions 9, 10 and 11. Focus on the passage from line 38 to the end.

9. Find the missing words to complete this summary.

Mr. (1)... is asking Mr. (2)... for dinner. As Mr. (3)... has to go away on business, he suggests Mr. (4)... should wait for him in the (5) ... and take this opportunity to select a (6) ...

Mr (7)... hesitates but finally (8)....

10. a) What do the two characters have in common?

b) In what way are they different? (20 words)

11. At the end of the passage, one of the characters presents two contrasting visions of the US. What are they? (30 words) Use elements from the text to justify your answer.

12. Translate into French from line 24: "I've always imagined ..." to line 26: "... shoulder."

II. EXPRESSION

Choose subject 1 or subject 2.

Subject 1:

a) lines 28-29: "But I've never come across one of you with an interest in books."

For some people, books are the only possible form of culture. Do you agree with them? (150 words)

b) lines 56-57: "To know a man's library is to know his mind." Discuss. (150 words)

Subject 2:

Could bartering be chosen as an interesting alternative to commerce? (300 words)