

Session 2006

BACCALAURÉAT GÉNÉRAL

ANGLAIS

Langue vivante 1

Séries ES - S

Durée : 3 heures – Coefficient 3

L'usage du dictionnaire et des calculatrices est interdit.

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| Compréhension | 10 points |
| Expression | 10 points |

Avant de composer, le candidat s'assurera que le sujet comporte bien 4 pages numérotées de 1/4 à 4/4.

Ratty's hunger was a twisting fist in his stomach. He went in.

'No, your tea's not ready yet so there's no use looking like that,' was Edith's greeting. The smell of frying bacon increased Ratty's hunger. 'Potatoes not boiled yet,' she added triumphantly, 'then there's the carrots to do. I don't know how you expect me to get it all up together, just the single saucepan...'

'Is there a cup of tea while we're waiting?'

'Tea, Ratty Tyler? Don't you listen to a word I say? I told you last night: I said now there's rationing we've got to cut down to three cups a day. There's a war on.' She began to scrape carrots.

Sensing the vegetables were still far from ready, Ratty went to sit in the chilly front room to listen to ITMA on the wireless. But, distracted, he turned the sound down low, hardly listening. Instead, his eyes fell on the framed photograph of Edward – Edward Tyler, their only son, killed in action in the last war.

Stored in boxes in the attic were bundles of letters from Edward, written from the trenches, many of their envelopes mud-splattered. Strangely, neither mud nor ink had faded. Ratty knew most of these letters by heart. The descriptions of a soldier's life were so extraordinarily vivid that Ratty felt he had shared the experience of every sensation with his son: sometimes he used to think Edward would be a writer when the war was over. He had the talent, surely. Ratty never mentioned this to Edith: she would have scoffed at so unmanly a suggestion. She probably had no idea the letters still existed. Unsentimental woman. Ratty had found her screwing up Edward's letters as she read them. If it hadn't been for Ratty's secret hoarding, there would be no voice, no words from Edward left. Edith even threw away the official letter that came to announce Edward had been mentioned in despatches. Ratty would never forgive her for that. Her lack of pride in her own son's courage was proof of her paucity of imagination: she was unable to understand or picture the horror, the fear, the bravery of a life unknown to her. She had never been able to read a face, a heart, a soul.

And what a funny old war, this one, compared with the last one, thought Ratty. So much of it, to date, had been spent in suspense and anticipation since the Polish invasion. The Battle of Britain had meant a little excitement and anxiety for six weeks: the Blitz in London, for all its horrors, had little effect on the rest of the country. Raids on the south coast were rare. In rural areas what you were left with were the frustrations of wartime regulations: rationing and blackouts, shortages of farm workers and clock menders – Ratty's broken alarm clock caused him great sadness when he discovered every clock mender for twenty miles had been called up. Indeed, here in Dorset you could be forgiven for thinking the war did not exist. The only thing that never faded, through every waking hour of the day, and troubled the dreams at night, was the tension, the constant anticipation of unknown possibilities. If Edward had lived, Ratty would have enjoyed discussing the two wars, the philosophical aspects of the loathsome thrill of danger, the peculiar pulling together of people by a common cause.

Ah! Ratty would have enjoyed discussing that and a thousand other subjects that held no interest for his wife. If Edward had lived – wife and family nearby, maybe, grandchildren coming to their grandfather to learn the ways of the land – life might have been very different. As it was, all Ratty could do was to try to carry out his son's last wish. In a letter that Edward had not known would be his last, in which he had been full of his usual humour, optimism and hope, he had ended with the binding words *Take care of Mum till I come back, Dad...* Which meant, when Edward was blown up a week later, take care of Edith for ever.

Angela Huth, *The Land Girls*, 1994 (abridged and adapted)

NOTE AUX CANDIDATS

Les candidats traiteront le sujet sur la copie qui leur sera fournie et veilleront à :

- a) respecter l'ordre des questions et reporter la numérotation sur la copie (numéro et lettre repère le cas échéant, ex 14 c) ;
- b) faire précéder les citations de la mention de la ligne ;
- c) composer des phrases complètes à chaque fois qu'il est demandé de rédiger la réponse.

COMPRÉHENSION

1. Who is Edward? How is he related to the other characters? (10 words)
2. Where does the action take place? Justify by quoting from the text.
3. When does the action take place?
4. Which wars do the following phrases refer to? Justify from the text.
 - a) 'the last war' (line 13). Give one quote.
 - b) 'a funny old war' (line 28). Give three quotes.
5.
 - a) Which two things help Ratty remember Edward?
 - b) One of those things is especially precious to him. Which one? Justify by giving two quotes.
 - c) Using your answer in question b), contrast his feelings with his wife's. (40 words)
6. '... a soldier's life...' (line 16) : What was this life like? Use your own words. (20 words)
7. Show that Edith and Ratty react differently to Edward's behaviour during the war. Express contrast. (30 words)
8. How does the 'funny old war, this one' (line 28) affect their everyday life? Quote four elements.
9. From an emotional point of view, what does Ratty miss most now? Quote two elements and use your own words. (20 words)

10. a) What was Edward's last wish? Make a sentence.
b) What does it show about his personality? Make a sentence.
c) What consequence does Edward's last wish imply for Ratty? Make a sentence.

11. Relationship between Ratty and Edith

- a) Choose among the following adjectives those which could apply to:
- Edith unpleasant / loving / caring / warm-hearted / bossy / cold-hearted
- Ratty submissive / unhappy / lonely / aggressive / cheerful
- b) Justify your choice in your own words. (60 words)

12. Whose point of view is expressed in the story? Justify your answer with one quote.

13. Translate into French from **line 42** 'If Edward had lived...' to **line 44** '... been very different.'

EXPRESSION

Choose one of the two topics and write an essay of 300 words.

1. Do you think that past wars teach people to defend peace?
2. As one grows older, how important is it to keep souvenirs of one's past?
Take examples from your own experience.