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## **AGREGATION EXTERNE D'ANGLAIS**

### **ÉPREUVE HORS PROGRAMME**

#### **Première partie** (*en anglais, durée maximale : 40 minutes*)

Vous procéderez à l'étude et à la mise en relation argumentée des trois documents du dossier proposé (A, B, C non hiérarchisés). Votre présentation ne dépassera pas 20 minutes et sera suivie d'un entretien de 20 minutes maximum.

#### **Deuxième partie** (*en français, durée maximale : 5 minutes*)

À l'issue de l'entretien de première partie, et à l'invitation du jury, vous vous appuierez sur l'un des trois documents du dossier pour proposer un projet d'exploitation pédagogique dans une situation d'enseignement que vous aurez préalablement définie. Cette partie ne donnera lieu à aucun échange avec le jury.

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## DOCUMENT A

**John Fowles. *The French Lieutenant's Woman* (1969), Chapter 55, London: Picador, 1992, pp. 343-349.**

Charles arrived at the station in ridiculously good time the next morning; and having gone through the ungentlemanly business of seeing his things loaded into the baggage van and then selected an empty first-class compartment, he sat impatiently waiting for the train to start. Other passengers looked in from time to time, and were rebuffed by that Gorgon stare (this compartment is reserved for non-lepers) the English have so easily at command. A whistle sounded, and Charles thought he had won the solitude he craved. But then at the very last moment, a massively bearded face appeared at his window. The cold stare was met by the even colder stare of a man in a hurry to get aboard.

The latecomer muttered a 'Pardon me, sir' and made his way to the far end of the compartment. He sat, a man of forty or so, his top hat firmly square, his hands on his knees, regaining his breath. There was something rather aggressively secure about him; he was perhaps not quite a gentleman... an ambitious butler (but butlers did not travel first class) or a successful lay preacher—one of the bullying tabernacle kind, a would-be Spurgeon, converting souls by scorching them with the cheap rhetoric of eternal damnation. A decidedly unpleasant man, thought Charles, and so typical of the age—and therefore emphatically to be snubbed if he tried to enter into conversation.

As sometimes happens when one stares covertly at people and speculates about them, Charles was caught in the act; and reproved for it. There was a very clear suggestion in the sharp look sideways that Charles should keep his eyes to himself. He hastily directed his gaze outside his window and consoled himself that at least the person shunned intimacy as much as he did.

Very soon the even movement lulled Charles into a *douce* daydream. London was a large city; but she must soon look for work. He had the time, the resources, the will; a week might pass, two, but then she would stand before him; perhaps yet another address would slip through his letter-box. The wheels said it: she-could-not-be-so-cruel, she-could-not-be-so-cruel, she-could-not-be-so-cruel... the train passed through the red and green valleys towards Cullompton. Charles saw its church, without knowing where the place was, and soon afterwards closed his eyes. He had slept poorly that previous night.

For a while his travelling companion took no notice of the sleeping Charles. But as the chin sank deeper and deeper—Charles had taken the precaution of removing his hat—the prophet-bearded man began to stare at him, safe in the knowledge that *his* curiosity would *not* be surprised.

His look was peculiar: sizing, ruminative, more than a shade disapproving, as if he knew very well what sort of man this was (as Charles had believed to see very well what sort of man *he* was) and did not much like the knowledge or the species. It was true that, unobserved, he looked a little less frigid and authoritarian a person; but there remained about his features an unpleasant aura of self-confidence—or if not quite confidence in self, at least a confidence in his judgment of others, of how much he could get out of them, expect from them, tax them.

A stare of a minute or so's duration, of this kind, might have been explicable. Train journeys are boring; it is amusing to spy on strangers; and so on. But this

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45 stare, which became positively cannibalistic in its intensity, lasted far longer than  
a minute. It lasted beyond Taunton, though it was briefly interrupted there when  
the noise on the platform made Charles wake for a few moments. But when he  
sank back into his slumbers, the eyes fastened on him again in the same leech-  
like manner.

50 You may one day come under a similar gaze. And you may—in the less  
reserved context of our own century—be aware of it. The intent watcher will not  
wait till you are asleep. It will no doubt suggest something unpleasant, some kind  
of devious sexual approach... a desire to know you in a way you do not want to be  
known by a stranger. In my experience there is only one profession that gives that  
55 particular look, with its bizarre blend of the inquisitive and the magistral; of the  
ironic and the soliciting.

Now could I use you?

Now what could I do with you?

60 It is precisely, it has always seemed to me, the look an omnipotent god—if  
there were such an absurd thing—should be shown to have. Not at all what we  
think of as a divine look; but one of a distinctly mean and dubious (as the  
theoreticians of the *nouveau roman* have pointed out) moral quality. I see this  
with particular clarity on the face, only too familiar to me, of the bearded man who  
stares at Charles. And I will keep up the pretence no longer.

65 Now the question I am asking, as I stare at Charles, is not quite the same  
as the two above. But rather, what the devil am I going to do with you? I have  
already thought of ending Charles's career here and now; of leaving him for  
eternity on his way to London. But the conventions of Victorian fiction allow,  
allowed no place for the open, the inconclusive ending; and I preached earlier of  
70 the freedom characters must be given. My problem is simple—what Charles wants  
is clear? It is indeed. But what the protagonist wants is not so clear; and I am not  
at all sure where she is at the moment. Of course if these two were two fragments  
of real life, instead of two figments of my imagination, the issue of the dilemma is  
obvious: the one want combats the other want, and fails or succeeds, as the  
75 actuality may be. Fiction usually pretends to conform to the reality: the writer puts  
the conflicting wants in the ring and then describes the fight—but in fact fixes the  
fight, letting that want he himself favours win. And we judge writers of fiction both  
by the skill they show in fixing the fights (in other words, in persuading us that  
they were not fixed) and by the kind of fighter they fix in favour of: the good one,  
80 the tragic one, the evil one, the funny one, and so on.

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## DOCUMENT B

**“Railway Imprisonment”, *The Saturday Review of Politics, Literature, Science and Art*, No. 455, Vol. 18, July 16, 1864, pp. 72-73.**

It is the glory of an age of scientific progress to have invented a perfectly new and unique description of social torture. The English railway carriage—more especially, the English first-class railway carriage—may be defined as an apparatus of unexampled efficiency for isolating a human being from the companionship and protection of his fellow-creatures, and exposing him a helpless prey to murderous outrage. It is a prison from which there is no escaping but with the certainty of broken bones and the risk of being pounded to atoms. It is a prison where associates may be forced upon a man without any choice of his own, of whose character and antecedents he knows nothing, and who, for aught he can tell, may be assassins or lunatics. No seclusion from the outer world can be more absolute, while it lasts, than that of the English railway traveller. For an interval varying from a few minutes to an hour or more, you may be shut up with a stranger of sinister aspect and worse than dubious mien, with the consciousness on both sides that nothing but your physical power of resistance can repel any ruffianism that malignity, lust, or frenzy may prompt. You know it, and he knows it, and you know that he knows it. You are surrounded on all hands by authority strong enough to hold you harmless against all wrong-doers; but between you and authority there is a great gulf fixed, which there is no possibility of passing. You might as well be in another planet for any protection that society has to give you against the foulest of crimes or the most terrible of mortal perils. Your cell may be on fire, but you have no choice except waiting to be burned or flinging yourself out at the risk of dying the death of the votaries of Juggernaut. The case has happened, and may any day happen again, of a number of helpless shrieking passengers being whirled along at express speed in a blazing carriage, from which they were only rescued by the sheer accident that the term of their imprisonment expired before the flames had quite done their work. We all remember, again, the story of that horrible journey during which the occupants of a carriage were engaged for the greater part of an hour in a life-and-death struggle with a raving madman—a story which found a partial parallel not many days ago in a case which occurred near Southampton, the chief difference being that in this instance the maniac sought to destroy his own life instead of cutting and stabbing his fellow-passengers. It is surprising that sensation novelists have never, so far as we recollect, availed themselves of a *motif* so well suited to the purposes of their art as the horrors of railway imprisonment under circumstances of deadly danger, with the means of protection and rescue close at hand, but hopelessly inaccessible.

There is no occasion to recount the details of that frightful tragedy which has just revealed to all but official eyes what we do not hesitate to call the worst of the many perils that beset railway travelling in this country. A gentleman returning to his suburban home on a summer evening, by one of the most frequented of metropolitan lines, is brutally murdered in a first-class carriage. Within the brief five minutes or less between Bow and Victoria Park, there is time for the assassin to execute, without let or hindrance, one of the most savage atrocities recorded in the annals of crime. Though there are indications of the victim having offered a desperate resistance (for the floor, sides, and windows of

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45 the carriage were found dripping with blood), and though he doubtless shouted for  
succour with all the strength of his voice, no sound of the struggle appears to have  
reached the ears of the occupants of the adjacent compartment. Penned up within  
the four walls of his temporary prison, he was as far from all possibility of human  
aid as if he and his assassin had been alone on a desert island. If he had had the  
50 means of signalling to the guard, there can be little question, from the violence of  
the death-grapple, that he would have had strength and presence of mind to use  
them—perhaps in time to save his life, almost certainly in time to prevent the  
escape of the murderer. Or, we should rather say, there would have been no  
murderer and no murder, for people do not, as a rule, commit crime when  
55 detection is visibly certain and impunity hopeless. But the stupidity and parsimony  
of Directors had ruled otherwise, and, during those terrible five minutes, crime had  
the field all to itself. Though blood was actually spurted on the dresses of ladies in  
the next compartment—doubtless at the moment when the almost lifeless body  
was flung out on the line—no alarm was or could be given. It was only when the  
60 train stopped, and a passenger about to take his seat laid his hand on a cushion  
steeped in gore, that it was discovered that a deed of unsurpassed atrocity had  
been done as it were in the very presence of deaf and blind authority. This is the  
English system of railway management—emphatically the English system, for it is  
unknown to any other civilized country. [...]

65 The infliction is a perfectly gratuitous one. The Boards themselves have not  
the effrontery to say that this absolute isolation from all human succour and  
protection is an unavoidable incident of railway locomotion. Nobody pretends that  
it is impossible to provide means of communication between passengers and  
guards. Not to speak of American railway arrangements, which might in some  
70 respects not suit British tastes, the example of the principal Continental lines  
shows that the object in view may be attained by contrivances adapted to English  
fashions of carriage-building and English notions of privacy. An exterior lodging or  
platform, attached to each carriage, is all that is needed to enable the guard to  
pass along the whole length of a train in motion as many times in the course of a  
75 journey as may be thought necessary.

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## DOCUMENT C

**Abraham Solomon, *First Class: The Meeting... and at First Meeting Loved*, 1854. Oil on canvas, 69 x 97 cm. National Gallery of Canada.**

