

EXAMEN DE FIN D'ÉTUDES SECONDAIRES GÉNÉRALES
Sessions 2023 – QUESTIONNAIRE ÉCRIT

Date :	08.06.23	Durée :	08:15 - 11:15	Numéro candidat :	
Discipline :	Anglais	Section(s) :	GED / GSH / GSI		

PART I: READING (20 marks)

Copy only the numbers / letters / words asked for onto your answer sheets. Do not copy questions!

Text 1 : The big idea: Why we need to make the world a darker place

Every year, deep in certain Swedish mines, the bat population is recorded. Each time I take part in the count, I turn out the light for a moment inside the darkness of the mountain to experience the unique sensation of stillness. I've started to try to bring that experience with me out of the mine and into my everyday life. Whenever I get the chance, I switch off for a little while and sit in the dark; in an armchair, in the garden, or in the forest. It's rare that the darkness is as dense and compact as it is in the underworld of the mine passages, but a dark room or an unlit forest path grants the same kind of rest. Darkness is a break from the constant flood of impressions, it's a visual silence – and a sort of primitive experience – in the otherwise too well-illuminated modern world.

For bats, darkness isn't a form of respite: it's essential. Darkness is their security, and their senses are formed accordingly. For humans, it's the opposite: we're a highly diurnal animal, dependent on sense impressions; light is our safety. Being afraid of the dark is woven deep within our genetic and cultural inheritance and it isn't strange that today we light up the gardens of our houses, industrial areas and carparks. Humanity has extended the day past dusk and into the night.

We call this light pollution – the artificial and undesired light from our streetlights and advertising that spills out into nature. As early as the 1880s English astronomers complained that the gas lights in London interfered with their night vision and ability to see objects in space. That was just the start. Less than a third of the world's population can see the Milky Way, and in Europe there will soon be an entire generation who have never properly seen it.

For some years now, an increasing number of scientists have taken an interest in the impact of light on physiology and ecology. We have begun to pay attention to the consequences of the absence of darkness, notably in the extinction of crepuscular and nocturnal animals, in plants that fail to be pollinated or bud too early and leaves that drop too late, in migrating animals that cannot navigate without the starry sky. In addition to global heating, plastic pollution, deforestation, noise, and other human-made problems, we also urgently need to take responsibility for the overproduction of light.

Today we can go anywhere we want and do anything, whenever the mood strikes us. It's always light. It is my hope that a greater understanding of what darkness allows to thrive – from insects to bats, extending outwards to an entire web of life – will convince us that protecting it should be a priority.

And if not for other creatures, then for ourselves: our circadian rhythm, our inner clock, evolved in a time without artificial light. Natural cycles of light and dark control our hormonal systems. The sleep hormone melatonin is only produced when it's getting dark outside and, in its wake, other hormones get switched on and off. Only at night do we find true rest. Rather than being a threat or something inconvenient, darkness needs to be recast in our minds as a resource that must be preserved, like so many other precious natural habitats.

(554 words; adapted from *theguardian.com*; Johan Eklöf translated by Elizabeth DeNoma; December 2022)

Read the text and identify the expressions that match the following definitions. Give one word only unless indicated otherwise. (8 marks, -1.5)

- 1) (adjective) dark because there are no lights or the lights are not switched on
- 2) (noun) a short break from something, rest or relaxation
- 3) (noun) the time before night when it is not yet dark
- 4) (phrasal verb) to flow or to fall out of a container / to come out of something
- 5) (adverb) especially, in particular / used for giving a good or the most important example of something
- 6) (verb) to grow / to flourish / to become and continue to be successful, strong, healthy
- 7) (adjective) annoying, problematic / causing trouble
- 8) (verb) to change something by organizing or presenting it in a different way

Text 2 : Spain has a plan to tackle food waste

Spain is cracking down on food waste. A draft of a new bill aimed at fighting food waste was approved by the country's Council of Ministers in June, and will now proceed to Parliament. Once approved, the law could take effect in early 2023.

The goal is to reduce the amount of food that goes to waste, which is currently estimated to be around 1,300 tonnes annually. That works out to roughly 68 pounds (31 kilograms) per Spaniard, valued around €250. While more than half of that waste takes place at home (54%), the bill is aimed more at the retail and hospitality sectors, though it does address the entire production chain.

Luis Planas, Spain's agricultural, fisheries and food minister, has described the law as a "pioneering judicial instrument" and the first of its kind in the country that is modeled on similar laws in Italy and France. He also framed it as an ethical move.

Medium- and large-scale retailers and restaurants will be required to present plans for food waste prevention and disposal, including a "hierarchy of priority destinations" that outline what happens to surplus food. Donating to food banks is encouraged, as long as the food is still safe for consumption. If it's starting to go bad, the bill suggests repurposing it in safe ways, such as making juice or jam. If it's not good for human consumption, then the item can be used for animal feed or in the production of biofuel or fertilizers.

Bars and restaurants must provide free packaging for guests to take food home if they have not finished it. While standard practice in North America, this is not common in Spain, either for cultural reasons or for the fact that portions tend to be much smaller; think of the popular tapas-style dining that revolves around multiple tiny plates of food. When supermarkets have food nearing expiry, they must sell it at discount or donate it before it goes bad.

There will be hefty financial penalties for businesses that fail to comply. These fines range from €6,000 to €150,000 (equivalent in USD). Not having a food loss and waste prevention plan in place could cost a business anywhere from €2,000 to €60,000. Second offenses cost even more, as much as half a million Euros.

It is impossible to outline a perfect approach, but we know that food waste deserves far more attention throughout the developed world. Any measures to inform and spur people to action are an improvement. It's a serious issue, with approximately one-third of food produced for human consumption going to waste, which amounts to nearly 1 billion tonnes and generates 8% of global greenhouse gas emissions. Reducing this waste could go a long way toward curbing emissions and fighting the climate crisis.

(461 words; adapted from *Treehugger*; Katherine Martinko; July 2022)

Decide whether the following statements are true or false (T/F) according to the article. If the information is not given in the article, the statement is considered false. (7 marks, -1.5)

- 1) The majority of food waste happens at home.
- 2) France and Italy have the same food waste law as Spain.
- 3) Making jams and juice is a safe way to deal with surplus food.
- 4) Free packaging is only offered in Spanish restaurants.
- 5) Supermarkets are forced to sell or give away food that has almost expired.
- 6) Businesses that do not follow the new law will suffer serious financial consequences.
- 7) Raising awareness of food waste is one way to help tackle the climate crisis.

Text 3: Why everyday stress could be the key to a healthy old age

Research indicates that low-level stress from moderate exercise or work can enhance our cognitive and physical abilities in later life.

(-1-) The mere mention of those six letters might elicit mental images of looming work deadlines, unpaid bills, the pressure of exams or tense family Christmases, to list just a few scenarios.

(-2-) Even though it can harm us, it also plays a key role in strengthening our immune system, forging connections in our brain that improve mental performance and building the resilience we need to navigate our way through the vagaries of life.

This first came to light through the work of an American psychiatrist called Firdaus Dhabhar, then a researcher at the Rockefeller University, New York, who was studying the connection between short-term stress and the immune system as part of the fight-or-flight response. **(-3-)** From a Darwinian perspective, the survival instincts of our animal ancestors would have been honed through repeated brushes with danger. “It does not make sense that stress should always be a bad, harmful, negative entity,” he says. **(-4-)** A gazelle needs this response to escape the jaws and claws of a lion, just as a lion needs it to catch its meal. Mother Nature gave us this response to help us survive and thrive, not to kill us.”

Over the past 20 years, Dhabhar and others have shown that bouts of short-term stress can aid us in the modern world. A Ted Talk by Dhabhar, now a professor at the University of Miami, on the positive effects of stress has garnered 30,000 views on YouTube. For example, the tension of an upcoming race helps prime the cardiovascular and musculoskeletal systems of athletes for optimum performance, while surveys have even found that the stress of needing to get work done alongside childcare means that parents are likely to be more productive home workers than singletons.

Both mild-to-moderate physical and mental stress stimulate the production of chemicals in the blood called interleukins, activating the immune system and making it more able to fight off infections, while stress can even affect the development of children before they are born. Babies born to mothers who experienced mild everyday stress during pregnancy had more advanced developmental skills by the age of two, compared with the children of mothers who had enjoyed a relatively relaxed, unstressful pregnancy.

(-5-) As well as the pressure and tension inflicted by life events, different forms of exercise can be viewed as stress for the muscles, while various types of cognitive challenges can be considered as stress for the mind.

(482 words; adapted from *theguardian.com*; David Cox; January 2023)

Read the article carefully, and then fill the gaps in the text with the missing sentences. There is one more sentence than you need! (5 marks, -1.5)

- A) There are also various ways to think about stress.
- B) Back then it made sense for Dhabhar to question the link between daily stress and the body's response to fighting off viruses.
- C) But what if I told you that stress can also be positive?
- D) Few words in the English language conjure up more negative emotions than stress.
- E) "The fight-or-flight stress response is essential for survival.
- F) In the mid-1990s, stress was viewed as almost unanimously bad for us, but to Dhabhar this was illogical.

PART II: SHORT STORIES (20 marks)

Answer the **TWO** questions on the short stories with close reference to the texts studied in class.

1. The First Seven Years – Bernard Malamud (10 marks)

Why does Sobel leave Feld at the beginning of the short story? Explain what kind of relationship they have.

AND

2. The Third and Final Continent - Jhumpa Lahiri (10 marks)

Describe the narrator's marriage. How does it change over the course of the short story?

PART III: ESSAY (20 marks)

Write a well-structured essay of 250-300 words on one of the following topics. Clearly indicate which topic you have chosen. Please indicate the number of words used.

A. Modern teachers are too permissive. Discuss.

OR

B. People have never been healthier than in modern times. Discuss.