

Epreuve écrite

Examen de fin d'études secondaires 2010

Section: A

Branche: ANGLAIS (texte inconnu)

Numéro d'ordre du candidat

Jane Eyre, Charlotte Brontë's masterpiece, tells the story of a plain but intelligent orphan girl, who is sent away to a school to be educated. Some weeks after her arrival, while Mr Brocklehurst is visiting the school with his family, Jane drops her slate in class.

'A careless girl!' said Mr Brocklehurst, and immediately after – 'It is the new pupil I perceive.'
And before I could draw breath, 'I must not forget I have a word to say respecting her.' Then aloud: how loud it seemed to be! 'Let the child who broke her slate come forward!'

Of my own accord I could not have stirred; I was paralysed: but the two great girls who sat on each side of me, set me on my legs and pushed me towards the dread judge, and then Miss Temple gently assisted me to his very feet, and I caught her whispered counsel:

'Don't be afraid, Jane, I saw it was an accident; you shall not be punished.'...

'Fetch that stool,' said Mr Brocklehurst, pointing to a very high one from which a monitor had just risen: it was brought.

'Place the child upon it.'

And I was placed there, by whom I don't know: I was in no conditions to note particulars; I was only aware that they had hoisted me up to the height of Mr Brocklehurst's nose, that he was within a yard of me, and that a spread of shot orange and purple silk pelisses and a cloud of silvery plumage extended and waved below me.

Mr Brocklehurst hemmed.

'Ladies, 'said he, turning to his family. 'Miss Temple, teachers, and children, you all see this girl?'

Of course they did; for I felt their eyes directed like burning-glasses against my scorched skin. 'You see she is yet young; you observe she possesses the ordinary form of childhood; God has graciously given her the shape that He has given to all of us; no signal deformity points her out as a marked character. Who would think that the Evil One had already found a servant and agent in her? Yet such, I grieve to say, is the case.'

A pause – in which I began to steady the palsy of my nerves, and to feel that the Rubicon was passed; and that the trial, no longer to be shirked, must be firmly sustained.

'My dear children,' pursued the black marble clergyman, with pathos, 'this is a sad, a melancholy occasion; for it becomes my duty to warn you, that this girl, who might be one of God's own lambs, is a little castaway: not a member of the true flock, but evidently an interloper and an alien. You must be on your guard against her; you must shun her example; if necessary, avoid her company, exclude her from your sports, and shut her out from your converse. Teachers you must watch her: keep your eyes on her movements, weigh well her words, scrutinize her actions, punish her body to save her soul: if, indeed, such salvation be possible, for (my tongue falters while I tell it) this girl, this child, the native of a Christian land, worse than many a little heathen who says its prayers to Brahma – this girl is – a liar!' (500 words)

Charlotte Brontë from *Jane Eyre*

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GLOSSARY:

slate: a small black board in a wooden frame used for writing on in the past

pelisse: an outer garment lined or trimmed with fur

Answer the following questions. Use your own words as far as possible.

1. Trace Jane Eyre's sequence of emotions from when she breaks the slate to when she is called a liar. (10 marks)
2. What insight does this give us into Jane's character? To what extent might her character have been affected by this incident? (12 marks)
3. What can the reader learn about Mr Brocklehurst's character from his behaviour in this extract? (12 marks)
4. Comment on the tone and its importance in this extract. Use specific references to the text to illustrate your answer. (12 marks)
5. In the 19th century when the novel was written, schools were a reflection of society. Does this view still hold true in the 21st century?
Write a personal comment in no more than 200 words and justify your answer. (14 marks)