

Epreuve écrite

Examen de fin d'études secondaires 2012

Section: A

Branche: anglais (texte inconnu)

Numéro d'ordre du candidat

Refugee Blues

Say this city has ten million souls,
Some are living in mansions, some are living in holes:
Yet there's no place for us, my dear, yet there's no place for us.

5 Once we had a country and we thought it fair,
Look in the atlas and you'll find it there:
We cannot go there now, my dear, we cannot go there now.

In the village churchyard there grows an old yew*,
Every spring it blossoms anew:
Old passports can't do that, my dear, old passports can't do that.

10 The consul* banged the table and said,
"If you've got no passport you're officially dead":
But we are still alive, my dear, but we are still alive.

15 Went to a committee; they offered me a chair;
Asked me politely to return next year:
But where shall we go today, my dear, where shall we go today?

Came to a public meeting; the speaker got up and said;
"If we let them in, they will steal our daily bread":
He was talking of you and me, my dear, he was talking of you and me.

20 Thought I heard the thunder rumbling in the sky;
It was Hitler over Europe, saying, "They must die":
O we were in his mind, my dear, O we were in his mind.

Saw a poodle* in a jacket fastened with a pin,
Saw a door opened and a cat let in:
But they weren't German Jews, my dear, but they weren't German Jews.

25 Went down the harbour and stood upon the quay*,
Saw the fish swimming as if they were free:
Only ten feet away, my dear, only ten feet away.

30 Walked through a wood, saw the birds in the trees;
They had no politicians and sang at their ease:
They weren't the human race, my dear, they weren't the human race.

Dreamed I saw a building with a thousand floors,
A thousand windows and a thousand doors:
Not one of them was ours, my dear, not one of them was ours.

35 Stood on a great plain in the falling snow;
Ten thousand soldiers marched to and fro;
Looking for you and me, my dear, looking for you and me.

W.H. Auden, 1939



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Annotations :

a yew (l. 7)	a tree with dark green leaves and red berries
a consul (l. 10)	a government official who lives in another country and looks after his country's citizens and business interests there
a poodle (l. 22)	a small dog with curly fur
a quay (l. 25)	a place in a harbour along which boats stop

Text analysis :

Answer the following questions in your own words.

1. Describe the situation and account for the overall mood. **(12 M.)**
2. How do bureaucrats as well as ordinary people add to the refugees' misery ? **(10 M.)**
3. The speaker repeatedly makes references to the natural world. What is his attitude to it and why ? **(12 M.)**
4. Consider any stanza and study its overall organization. To what purpose are rhyme, linking as well as contrasting devices, and register used ? **(14 M.)**

Personal Opinion :

5. Elie Wiesel, a famous survivor of the Holocaust, once suggested that "The opposite of love is not hate, it's indifference. "

Discuss in about 150 words. **(12 M.)**

