



ÉPREUVE ÉCRITE : <i>Repêchage</i>	Branche : ANGLAIS – textes connus
Section(s) : A	N° d'ordre du candidat :
Date de l'épreuve : <i>6 juin 2016</i>	Durée de l'épreuve : 2 ½ heures

I. Guided comprehension (30 marks)

Read the following excerpt from *The Handmaid's Tale* and answer the questions below.

Noise is coming up, coming out, of the broken place, in my face. Without warning: I wasn't thinking about here or there or anything. If I let the noise get out into the air it will be laughter, too loud, too much of it, someone is bound to hear, and then there will be hurrying footsteps and commands and who knows? Judgement: emotion inappropriate to the occasion. [...] And then a needle, a pill. It could be fatal.

I cram both hands over my mouth as if I'm about to be sick, drop to my knees, the laughter boiling like lava in my throat. I crawl into the cupboard, draw up my knees, I'll choke on it. My ribs hurt with holding back, I shake, I heave, seismic, volcanic, I'll burst. Red all over the cupboard, mirth rhymes with birth, oh to die of laughter.

I stifle it in the folds of the hanging cloak, clench my eyes, from which tears are squeezing. Try to compose myself.

After a while it passes, like an epileptic fit. Here I am in the closet. Nolite te bastardes carborundorum. I can't see it in the dark but I trace the tiny scratched writing with the ends of my fingers, as if it's a code in Braille. It sounds in my head now less like a prayer, more like a command; but to do what? Useless to me in any case, an ancient hieroglyph to which the key's been lost. Why did she write it, why did she bother? There's no way out of here.

I lie on the floor, breathing too fast, then slower, evening out my breathing, as in the exercises, for giving birth. All I can hear now is the sound of my own heart, opening and closing, opening and closing, opening.

- 1) Situate this passage in its precise context. What has triggered this reaction of the narrator's? (6 marks)
- 2) What does this excerpt reveal about repression in Gilead? (8 marks)
- 3) Explain the narrator's reference to 'the tiny scratched writing' and expound on the thoughts and ideas it conjures up in her. (8 marks)
- 4) Comment on the way Atwood uses language and imagery in this passage to convey the narrator's physical and emotional state. (8 marks)

II. Essay on William Shakespeare's *Macbeth* (30 marks)

Write a structured and coherent essay on **ONE** of the following topics. Use between 300 and 400 words – quotations excluded – and indicate the number of words used. Support your arguments with quotes and precise references to the play.

A) In Act I, Scene II, the Captain tells King Duncan:

As whence the sun 'gins his reflection
Shipwrecking storms and direful thunders break;
So from that spring, whence comfort seem'd to come
Discomfort swells.

In *Macbeth*, events and people frequently turn out to be other than what they appear to be. Discuss how the play explores the often fateful difference between appearance and reality.

B) "In *Macbeth*, Shakespeare explores and challenges ideas of traditional gender roles, regarding leadership, power and masculinity." Discuss.