

BACCALAURÉAT GÉNÉRAL

Session 2019

ANGLAIS

Langue Vivante 1

Durée de l'épreuve : 3 heures

Séries ES/S – coefficient : 3

Série L langue vivante obligatoire (LVO) – coefficient : 4

Série L LVO et langue vivante approfondie (LVA) – coefficient : 8

L'usage de la calculatrice et du dictionnaire n'est pas autorisé.

Ce sujet comporte 7 pages numérotées de 1/7 à 7/7.
Dès que ce sujet vous est remis, assurez-vous qu'il est complet.

Répartition des points

Compréhension	10 points
Expression	10 points

DOCUMENT A

Author's Note

In April 1992, a young man from a well-to-do East Coast family hitchhiked to Alaska and walked alone into the wilderness north of Mt. McKinley. Four months later his decomposed body was found by a party of moose hunters.

5 Shortly after the discovery of the corpse, I was asked by the editor of *Outside* magazine to report on the puzzling circumstances of the boy's death. His name turned out to be Christopher Johnson McCandless. He'd grown up, I learned, in an affluent suburb of Washington, D.C., where he'd excelled academically and had been an elite athlete.

10 Immediately after graduating, with honors, from Emory University in the summer of 1990, McCandless dropped out of sight. He changed his name, gave the entire balance of a twenty-four-thousand-dollar savings account to charity, abandoned his car and most of his possessions, burned all the cash in his wallet. And then, he invented a new life for himself, taking up residence at the ragged margin of our society, wandering across North America in search of raw¹, transcendent experience. His family had no
15 idea where he was or what had become of him until his remains turned up in Alaska.

Working on a tight deadline, I wrote a nine-thousand-word article, which ran in the January 1993 issue of the magazine, but my fascination with McCandless remained long after that issue of *Outside* was replaced on the newsstands by more current
20 journalistic fare. I was haunted by the particulars of the boy's starvation and by vague, unsettling parallels between events in his life and those in my own. Unwilling to let McCandless go, I spent more than a year retracing the convoluted path that led to his death in the Alaska taiga, chasing down details of his peregrinations with an interest that bordered on obsession. In trying to understand McCandless, I inevitably came to
25 reflect on other, larger subjects as well: the grip wilderness has on the American imagination, the allure high-risk activities hold for young men of a certain mind, the complicated, highly charged bond that exists between fathers and sons. The result of this meandering inquiry is the book now before you.

I won't claim to be an impartial biographer. McCandless's strange tale struck a
30 personal note that made a dispassionate rendering of the tragedy impossible. Through most of the book, I have tried—and largely succeeded, I think—to minimize my authorial presence. But let the reader be warned: I interrupt McCandless's story with fragments of a narrative drawn from my own youth. I do so in the hope that my experiences will throw some oblique light on the enigma of Chris McCandless.

Jon Krakauer
Seattle
April 1995

Jon Krakauer, *Into the Wild*, 1996

¹ raw: natural, simple, unrefined

DOCUMENT B

REFLECTIONS ON BIOGRAPHY

“KNOWING” THE SUBJECT

February 17, 2016

by Nigel Hamilton

The history of biography is studded with cases where the biographer knew the biographee in person – from Boswell’s *The Life of Samuel Johnson, LL.D.* to Walter Isaacson’s *Steve Jobs*. Naturally, in terms of objectivity, this makes those biographies suspect in the academy¹ – guilty of inevitable bias, whether negative or positive.

5 Who would not willingly exchange an ‘objective’ biography of the elusive Shakespeare, though, for one penned by a biographer who had actually *known* the Bard in person? The fact is, all good biographers seek to emulate the knower-in-person. We seek to convey personality, as Virginia Woolf deemed the primary objective in modern
10 biography, and to create in the reader’s mind an intimacy with the subject that one might call ‘literary friendship.’ To achieve this, following Dr. Johnson’s prescription, we try to describe the biographee in his or her habitat, as well as in public office. We try to quote those who have actually met or known the subject in person. And we use the subject’s own writings or recorded sayings – in diaries, letters, memoranda, drafts, conversations, texts – to *simulate* a sort of longer conversation, or audience with the
15 subject. We want the reader to close our books feeling he or she had gotten to “know” the biographee, in good times and bad, and is consequently empowered to form a judgment, not only of the biographee’s public life, but personal life, and their intersection, for good or ill.

20 That biographical imperative, re-emphasized by Dr. Johnson, probably goes back to the *encomia*² or spoken tributes delivered in Greek and Roman times – just as the tradition survives today at memorial services, where people who actually *knew* the deceased in person stand in front of mourners to offer a personal memoir or vignette, in advance of society’s judgment – or failure to judge.

<https://biographicsociety.org/tag/biographer-subject-relationship/>

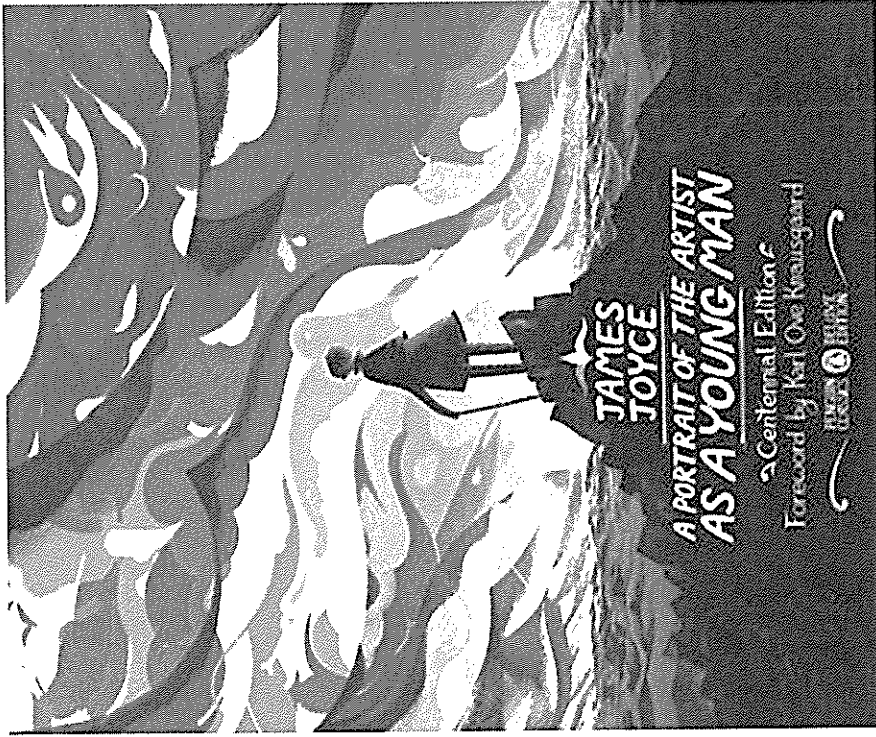
Dr Nigel Hamilton is a University professor and the Honorary President of the Biography Society, an international society of research devoted to the development of the theory and the practice of biography.

¹ in the academy: among academics, university lecturers

² *encomia* = praise, homage

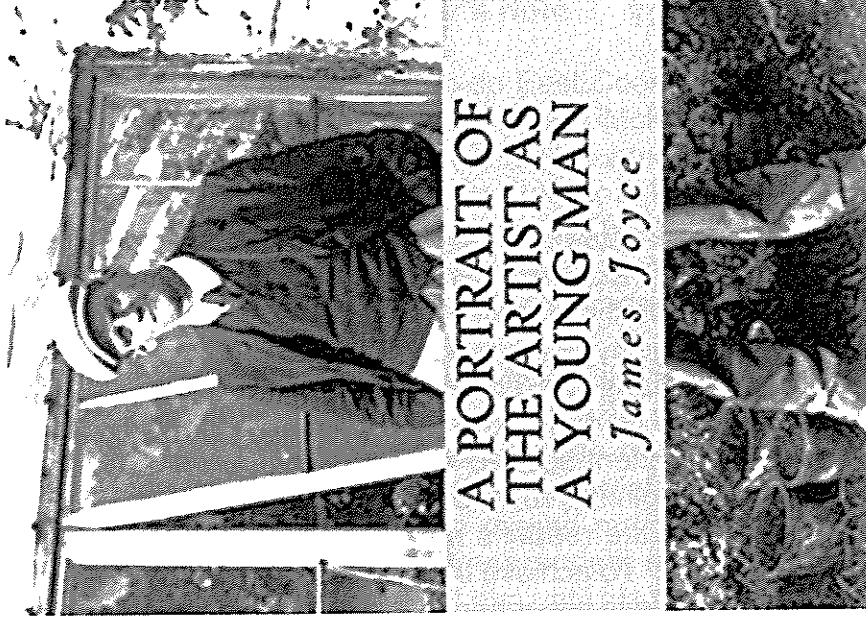
DOCUMENT C

James Joyce is an Irish writer (1882-1941). *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* tells the story of Stephen Dedalus, a boy growing up in Ireland at the end of the nineteenth century. He decides to get rid of all family and social constraints to live a life devoted to the art of writing.



Cover 1

Cover of the novel (Penguin Classics Deluxe Edition, 2016) inspired by *Wanderer above the Sea of Fog*, an 1818 painting by Caspar David Friedrich, a German Romantic landscape painter.



Cover 2

Cover of the 2017 ebook edition of the same novel (CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform), with a photograph of the writer standing beside a greenhouse in Dublin, 1904.

NOTE IMPORTANTE AUX CANDIDATS

Les candidats traitent le sujet **sur la copie qui leur sera fournie** et veillent à :

- respecter l'ordre des questions et reporter les repères sur la copie (numéro ou numéro et lettre, etc) ;
- faire toujours suivre les citations du numéro de la ou des ligne(s) ;
- recopier les phrases à compléter **en soulignant** l'élément introduit ;
- répondre **en anglais** aux questions.

I. COMPRÉHENSION (10 points)

DOCUMENT A

Tous les candidats traitent les questions 1 à 4.

1. Who was Christopher Johnson McCandless? Answer the question, focusing on the three main phases in his life.
2. What is the link between Christopher Johnson McCandless and Jon Krakauer?
3. What can you deduce about the literary genre of *Into the Wild*? Write the correct answer.
 - autobiography
 - biography
 - science fiction
 - detective fiction
 - essay

Focus on lines 1 to 15.

4. Concentrate on Christopher Johnson McCandless.
 - a) In what way was 1990 a turning point in his life?
 - b) What is said about his life before 1990? (family background, place where he lived, studies and achievements)
 - c) What did he do in 1992?

Seuls les candidats de la série L composant au titre de la LVA (Langue Vivante Approfondie) traitent la question 5.

5. McCandless was "in search of raw, transcendent experience" (l.14). Explain, using elements from the text.

Tous les candidats traitent les questions 6 et 7.

6. Why did Jon Krakauer initially write about Christopher Johnson McCandless?

Focus on line 16 to line 33.

7. Jon Krakauer writes that he was “unwilling to let McCandless go” (l.20).
- What does this statement reveal about the evolution of Jon Krakauer’s interest in McCandless? Quote the words he uses to define his interest.
 - What caused this evolution? Find three reasons.

Seuls les candidats des séries L, ES et S composant au titre de la LVO (Langue Vivante Obligatoire) traitent la question 8.

8. “I won’t claim to be an impartial biographer” (l.28).
- What does this comment show about Jon Krakauer’s intentions?
 - How does he feel about the result?
 - Did he fully succeed?

Seuls les candidats de la série L composant au titre de la LVA (Langue Vivante Approfondie) traitent la question 9.

9. How does the nature of his interest affect the objectivity of his narrative? Why? Justify your answer with three different ideas.

DOCUMENT B

Tous les candidats traitent les questions 10 à 13.

10. Why does the academy believe a biographer shouldn’t know his biographee? Support your answer with elements from the text.
11. Does the author of this article agree with this principle? Justify by quoting from the text.
12. Focus on lines 7 to 10. What should the goals of modern biographers be? Give three elements.
13. Pick out three elements from the text that explain how these goals can be achieved.

Seuls les candidats de la série L composant au titre de la LVA (Langue Vivante Approfondie) traitent la question 14.

14. What kind of relationship is built between readers and biographees? What does it enable readers to do?

Tous les candidats traitent les questions 15 à 16.

DOCUMENT C

15. a) What are the most significant differences between the two illustrations chosen for the front covers of *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*? Give three elements at least.
- b) What is the effect produced by each cover on the potential readers?

DOCUMENTS A, B AND C

16. How are the notions of objectivity and distance in biography illustrated in the three documents?

II. EXPRESSION (10 points)

Afin de respecter l'anonymat de votre copie, vous ne devez pas signer votre composition, citer votre nom, celui d'un camarade ou celui de votre établissement.

Seuls les candidats des séries L, ES et S composant au titre de la LVO (Langue Vivante Obligatoire) traitent les questions 1 et 2.

1. The postal services have recovered a letter from Christopher Johnson McCandless in which he explains to his family why he decided to change lives. Imagine what the letter is. (150 words +/- 10%)

ET

2. Can anyone become the subject of a biography? (200 words +/- 10%)

Seuls les candidats de la série L composant au titre de la LVA (Langue Vivante Approfondie) traitent obligatoirement la question 3 et traitent également la question 4 ou 5 au choix. (soit la question 3 + la question 4, soit la question 3 + la question 5)

3. Can anyone become the subject of a biography? (200 words +/- 10%)

ET

4. Gloria Steinem, an American journalist once said: "All biographers end up using their subjects as mirrors to figure themselves out." Do you agree with her statement? (200 words +/- 10%)

OU

5. You have decided to write the biography of a personality or celebrity you admire. You are writing to a publisher to convince him to accept your project. Write the letter (200 words +/- 10%)