مجلس الخدمة المدنية
ادارة الموظفيـــــن
اللجنـــــة الفاحصـــة

مباراة ٢٠٠٤/٤/٢٧ للتعيين بوظيفة استاذ تعليم ثانوي .

مسابقة في الثقافة العامة باللغة العربية .

الوقت: ساعتان

الاختصاص: كيمياء باللغتين الفرنسية والانكليزية

التقدم العلمي التكنولوجي سلاح ذو حدّين .
الى اي مدى استخدم الانسان هذا التقدم من اجل التنمية وخير البشرية ، والى اي مـــدى تـــمّ تسخيره في خدمة المصلحة الانانية للافراد والشعوب على حساب القيم الانسانية ؟

دعّم رأيك بامثلة عن توظيف هذا التقدم في كلّ من الاتجاهين .

بيروت، في ٢٠٠٤/٧/٢٧

اللجنة الفاحصة

مجلس الخدمة المدنية

ادارة الموظفيـــن

اللجنـــة الفاحصـــة

مباراة ٢٠٠٤/٧/٢٧ المحصورة للتعيين في وظيفة استاذ

تعليم ثانوي في ملاك وزارة التربية والتعليم العالي.

الاختصاص: كيمياء باللغة الانكليزية

مسابقة في الاختصاص المطلوب

الوقت :اربع ساعات

I- An empty flask of mass 134.567 g weighs 137.465 g when filled with an unknown gas of molar mass M and 1067.6 g when filled with water. Calculate the molar mass of this gas assuming that it behaves as a perfect gas.

Given: P = 0.967 atm T = 31 ^{0}C R = 0.082 L.atm^{-1}.mol^{-1}.K^{-1}

Density of water under these conditions = 0.997 g/mL

II. A) Use the VSEPR theory to predict the molecular geometry of each of the following species: H_3O^+; PCl_5; and CO_2. Draw the geometry of each species.

Given: $_1$H $_6$C $_8$O $_{15}$P $_{17}$Cl

B) Arrange the following species Al^{3+}; O^{2-}; O; Ne; Cl^- in increasing order of their atomic or ionic radii. Briefly justify.

Given: $_8$O $_{10}$Ne $_{13}$Al $_{17}$Cl

III. The decomposition of hydrogen peroxide H_2O_2 takes place according to the following reaction :

$$2\ H_2O_{2(g)} \rightarrow 2\ H_2O_{(g)} + O_{2(g)}$$

Given at 298 ^{o}K

$\Delta H_f(H_2O_2) = -136.10$ kJ.mol^{-1} ; $\Delta H_f(H_2O) = -241.82$ kJ.mol^{-1}

$\Delta S = 129.7$ JK^{-1}

$\Delta G = -250.09$ kJ.

1) Calculate ΔH of the reaction.
2) Is the reaction spontaneous? Explain.
3) Explain why ΔS of this reaction is positive.
4) Show how the value of ΔG may be calculated from the values of ΔH and ΔS.

IV. Given the equilibrium:

$$SO_2Cl_{2(g)} \rightleftarrows SO_{2(g)} + Cl_{2(g)} \quad \Delta H = 84 \text{ kJ}$$

1) 0.12 mol of SO_2 and 0.12 mol of Cl_2 are introduced into a 2 L flask at 377 ^{0}C. A chemical reaction occurs and gives 2×10^{-2} mol of $SO_2Cl_{2(g)}$ at equilibrium.
Calculate the equilibrium constant K_C and deduce K_P for the equilibrium.

2) The temperature of the flask is reduced to 327 ^{0}C. How does this equilibrium constant K_C vary? Justify.

3) If the volume of the flask is doubled at 377 ^{0}C, how is the equilibrium constant K_C affected? Justify.

V. Given the following reaction:

$$H_2O_2 + 2I^- + 2H^+ \rightarrow 2\,H_2O + I_2$$

The pH is kept constant by making use of an appropriate buffer solution. The concentration of I_2 is monitored by titrating it with standard 10^{-3} M thiosulfate $S_2O_3^{2-}$ solution. 10 mL of 2.1×10^{-2} M H_2O_2, 10 mL of 4.1×10^{-2} M KI and 80 mL of a buffer solution pH = 1.38 were reacted in a beaker. 10 mL of the reaction mixture was pipetted and titrated with the standard thiosulfate.

1) Calculate the initial concentrations of $[H_2O_2]_0$, $[I^-]_0$, $[H^+]_0$.
2) Esatblish the relation between V and x where V is the volume of $S_2O_3^{2-}$ at time t and x is the concentration of I_2 at the same time. Calculate the volume of $S_2O_3^{2-}$ V_∞ at t_∞.
3) Calculate the quantity of iodine consumed by 1 mL of thiosulfate.
4) Give the rate law of the reaction.
5) The following experimental results are given :

t (sec)	60	120	240	360	480	600
V (mL)	1	2	3.9	5.6	7.1	8

a) For each time value in the table, calculate the number of moles of I_2 formed by the slow reaction.
b) Draw the curve of number of moles n of I_2 as a function of t.

Scale: 1cm → 100 sec
1cm → 0.5×10^{-6} mol

c) Making use of the above graph, calulate the rate of formation of I_2 at 400 Sec.

5) Claculate the half-life ($t_{1/2}$) of the raction.

VI. A) Complete and balance the following Ox –Red reaction:

$$Cl_2 + OH^- \rightarrow ClO_3^- + Cl^- + H_2O$$

B) Given a standard galvanic cell Ag^+/Ag and Zn^{2+}/Zn

$[Ag^+] = [Zn^{2+}] = 1M.$

$E^0\ Ag^+/Ag = 0.80\ v$ $\qquad$ $E^0\ Zn^{2+}/Zn = -0.76\ v$

1) Draw this cell showing the sign of each electrode. Show the reaction taking place at each electrode. Calculate E^0 and the equilibrium constant of the reaction.
2) Give the Nernst equation associated with each electrode. Calculate E when the concentrations of $[Ag^+]$ and $[Zn^{2+}]$ are 10^{-1} and 10^{-2} respectively.
3) Calculate the approximate concentrations of $[Ag^+]$ and $[Zn^{2+}]$ when the reaction ends.

VII. A) The pH of an aqueous solution Z of a mixture of nitric acid and acetic acid was found by a pH meter to be equal to one. 100 mL of this solution required 50 ml of 2 M NaOH to reach phenolphthalein end point. Calculate the acetic acid and nitrate ion concentrations in Z.

B) A monoprotic weak acid HA was titrated with M molar NaOH solution using phenolphthalein indicator. After the addition of 20 ml of NaOH the pH of the solution was found to be equal to 6 by a pH meter. Addition of NaOH was resumed until the solution turned pinkish. At that point the total volume of NaOH consumed as read by the buret was 40 ml. Calculate the K_a of HA.

C) Given two solutions S and S' each containing equimolar mixture of ethanoic acid and sodium ethanoate.

For S: $[CH_3COO\ H] = [CH_3\ COO^-] = 10^{-1}\ mol.L^{-1}$

For S': $[CH_3COOH] = [CH_3\ COO^-] = 10^{-2}\ mol.L^{-1}$

2×10^{-2} mol of OH- ions are added to 1 L of each of the above solutions (without any noticeable variation in volume)

a) Calculate the new pH of solution S. What was the variation in pH?
b) Calculate the new pH of solution S. Did solution S' behave as a buffer solution? Justify.

D) Sodium hydroxide solutions (NaOH) are usually standardized using oxalic acid $H_2C_2O_4$ as a primary standard. NaOH is used in titrating HCl and acetic acid solutions.

1) Which reagent is more conveniently placed in the buret? Explain.
2) If stirring of the solution in the flask is done manually what type of flask is recommended for this titration. Explain.
3) Which of the following do you recommend for measuring 10 mL of the reagent that is placed in the flask to be titrated: a graduated pipet? A volumetric pipet? Or a graduated cylinder? Explain.
4) All the glassware used in this titration should be properly cleaned. With what do you recommend rinsing each type of glassware used in this titration?

VIII. A) Alcohols react with acids to give esters and water. The reaction is catalyzed by concentrated sulfuric acid.

1) Explain why no ester is usually formed in dilute aqueous solutions.
2) Write down the general esterification reaction when an alcohol (RO*H) (O* $\equiv {}^{18}O$) is used, showing clearly where O* winds up in the products. Explain your reasoning.
3) H_2SO_4 plays a double role in catalyzing esterification. What are they?
4) What is the order of reactivity of 1°, 2 ° and 3 ° alcohols? Explain your reasoning.

B) Ethanol reacts with sulfuric acid to give different products depending on the reaction conditions

1) Show the product obtained when the reaction is affected at a) 140 °C. b) 180 °C.
2) Show the mechanism of formation of the product in each case.
3) Does tertiary butyl alcohol react in the same way? Explain.

IX. Given: atomic masses in g/mol

H =1, C = 12, O = 16

The triglyceride of Lauric acid is saponified with potassium hydroxide to produce a soft soap. Lauric acid is a mono saturated 12 C fatty acid, and potassium hydroxide is a white solid whose aqueous solution is strongly basic. Indicate which of the following statements is correct and explain.

1- The molar mass of Lauric acid is 200.
2- The molecular formula of the triglyceride is $C_{39}H_{24}O_3$.
3- In the mechanism of the saponification reaction the hydroxide is the nucleophile.
4- The saponification reaction produces a tri-ol.
5- The cleaning effect of the soap is due to the hydrophilic character of the C chain.

X. Answer the following questions:

1. Some car engine parts are made of polymers. Do you think these polymers are thermosetting or thermoplastic? Explain briefly your answer.
2. Suppose a sample of protein is completely hydrolyzed and another sample of the same protein is denatured. Compare the final products of these processes. Explain.
3. There exists a carbohydrate that is slightly soluble in water, does not have a sweet taste, but does dissolve slowly when heated with dilute HCl. To what class of carbohydrates does it probably belong?
4. When someone with silver filling in a tooth bites down on an aluminum gum wrapper, saliva acts as an electrolyte. The system is an electrochemical cell, which produces a slight of pain. Explain what happens.
5. What are two differences between conductors and ceramic superconductors?

بيروت، في ٢٠٠٤/٨/٩

اللجنة الفاحصة

مجلس الخدمة المدنية
ادارة الموظفيـــن
اللجنـــة الفاحصـــة

مباراة ٢٠٠٤/٧/٢٧ المحصورة للتعيين في وظيفة استاذ
تعليم ثانوي في ملاك وزارة التربية والتعليم العالي.

الاختصاص: كيمياء باللغة الفرنسية

مسابقة في الاختصاص المطلوب

الوقت :اربع ساعات

I – Un flacon vide pèse 134,567 g. Rempli d'un gaz de masse molaire M inconnue, il pèse 137,465 g. Une fois propre et sec, il est rempli d'eau et pesé. Sa masse est alors 1067,6 g. En supposant que l'équation des gaz parfaits peut être appliquée, calculer la masse molaire du gaz.
On donne :
P = 0,967 atm.
$\theta = 31\ ^{o}C$
Masse volumique de l'eau dans ces conditions : $\rho = 0,997\ g.cm^{-3}$
Constante des gaz parfaits : $R = 0,082\ L.atm.mol^{-1}.K^{-1}$.

II –A - Utiliser la méthode de V.S.E.P.R. pour prévoir la forme géométrique de chacune des espèces chimiques suivantes: H_3O^+ ; PCl_5 ; CO_2
Représenter la forme géométrique de chacune de ces espèces.
On donne: $_1H$, $_8O$, $_6C$, $_{15}P$, $_{17}Cl$

B- Classer les espèces suivantes:
Al^{3+} ; O^{2-} ; O ; Ne ; Cl^-
Dans l'ordre croissant de leur rayon. Justifier brièvement.
$_8O$; $_{10}Ne$; $_{13}Al$; $_{17}Cl$

III – La décomposition du peroxyde d'hydrogène H_2O_2 a lieu suivant l'équation-bilan:
$2\ H_2O_{2(g)} \rightarrow 2\ H_2O_{(g)} + O_{2(g)}$

A 298 °K, les données thermodynamiques de la réaction sont :
$\Delta H_f(H_2O_2) = -136,10\ kJ.mol^{-1}$; $\Delta H_f(H_2O) = -241,82\ kJ.mol^{-1}$
$\Delta S = 129,7\ J.K^{-1}$
$\Delta G = -250,09\ kJ.$

- Calculer l'enthalpie ΔH de la réaction.
- Est-ce que la réaction est spontanée? Justifier.
- Justifier la valeur positive de ΔS.
- Montrer le calcul de la valeur de ΔG à partir des valeurs de ΔH et de ΔS.

IV- Soit l'équilibre:

$$SO_2Cl_2(g) \rightleftarrows SO_2(g) + Cl_2(g) \text{ avec } \Delta H = 84Kj$$

1- On introduit dans un récipient de volume 2L à 377°C les deux gaz suivants: 0,12 mol de SO_2 et 0,12 mol de Cl_2 . une réaction chimique se produit et donne à l'équilibre 2.10^{-2} mol de $SO_2Cl_{2(g)}$. Calculer la constante d'équilibre K_c et déduire K_p de l'équilibre donné ci-haut.

2- On abaisse la température dans le récipient à 327°C . Comment varie la constante d'équilibre K_c?

3- Si on double le volume du récipient à 377°C, comment varie la constante d'équilibre K_c? justifier.

On donne $R = 0.08$ atm.L.K^{-1} mol^{-1}

V- On se propose d'étudier la cinétique de la réaction:

$H_2O_2 + 2I^- + 2H^+ \rightarrow 2\ H_2O + I_2$

On opère à température constante, le PH étant maintenu constant à l'aide d'un mélange tampon approprié. La réaction est suivie par dosage de I_2 par le thiosulfate $S_2O_3^{2-}$ à 10^{-3} mol/L. Pour cela on introduit dans un bécher 10mL de H_2O_2 à 2.10^{-2} mol/L, 10mL de KI à 4.10^{-2} mol/L et 80mL de solution tampon à PH = 1,38. Le dosage s'éffectue en prélevant 10mL de mélange réactionnel et en dosant I_2 formé par un volume de $S_2O_3^{2-}$ en mL (V mL)

1) Calculer les concentrations initiales de $[H_2O_2]_0$, $[I^-]_0$, $[H^+]_0$

2) Établir la relation entre V et x, V étant le volume de $S_2O_3^{2-}$ à l'instant t et x étant la concentration de I_2 à l'instant t.

Calculer la valeur de $V\infty$ du volume de $S_2O_3^{2-}$ à t infini

3) Calculer la quantité de diode consommé par 1mL de thiosulfate

4) Donner l'expression de la loi de vitesse

5) L'étude experimentale donne les résultats suivants :

t (sec)	60	120	240	360	480	600
V (mL)	1	2	3,9	5,6	7,1	8

a) Pour chaque date du tableau, calculer le nombre de mole de I_2 formé par la réaction lente depuis le départ de la réaction

b) Tracer le graphe de n de I_2 en fonction de t. Echelle 1cm → 100 sec
1cm → $0,5.10^{-6}$ mol

c) Á l'aide du graphe précédent, calculer la vitesse v de formation de I_2 à la date 400 s .

6) Calculer la valeur du temps de demi-réaction $t_{1/2}$

VI- A- Compléter et équilibrer l'équation – bilan de la réaction d'oxydo- réduction suivante:

$Cl_2 + HO^- \rightarrow ClO^-_3 + Cl^- + H_2O$

B-1)On forme une pile qui fait intervenir les deux couples Ag^+/Ag et Zn^{2+}/Zn à l'état standard $[Ag^+] = [Zn^{2+}] = 1M$.
$E^0\ Ag^+/Ag = 0,80$ volt $\qquad E^0\ Zn^{2+}/Zn = -0,76$ volt

a) Faire le schéma de la pile. Préciser les polarités de cette pile. Ecrire les réactions au niveau des electrodes et l'équation-bilan de la réaction .

b) Déterminer la f.e.m de la pile. Deduire la constante d'équilibre de l'équation-bilan

2-a) Écrire l'équation de Nernset au niveau de chaque electrode. Calculer la f.e.m de la pile si les concentrations de $[Ag^+] = 10^{-1}$ M et $[Zn^{2+}] = 10^{-2}$ M

b)Calculer de manière approchée les concentrations de $[Ag^+]$ et $[Zn^{2+}]$ lorsque la pile ne débite plus.

VII – A- Le pH d'une solution aqueuse Z, d'un melange d'acide nitrique et d'acide acetique, mesure au moyen d'un pH-metre, est trouve egal a 1. 100 mL de cette solution ont besoin de 50 mL d'une solution de NaOH 2 $mol.L^{-1}$ pour atteindre l'equivalence, en presence de phenolphtaleine. Calculer les concentrations molaires de l'acide acetique et des ions nitrate dans la solution Z.

B – Un monoacide faible HA est titre par une solution de NaOH 1 $mol.L^{-1}$, en presence de phenolphtaleine comme indicateur. Aprés l'addition de 20 mL de NaOH, le pH de la solution, mesure au moyen d'un pH-metre, est trouve égal à 6 . L'addition de NaOH est continuee jusqu'a que la solution rosatre . A ce point , le volume total de NaOH lu sur la burette, vaut 40 mL. Calculer la constante K_a de HA .

C- On considère deux solutions S et S', mélanges équimolaires d'acide éthanoïque et d'éthanoate de sodium.

- pour S : $[CH_3COO\,H] = [CH_3\,COO^-] = 10^{-1}\ mol.L^{-1}$
- pour S' : $[CH_3\,COO\,H] = [CH_3\,COO^-] = 10^{-2}\ mol.L^{-1}$
- Dans un litre de chaque solution, on ajoute 2. 10^{-2} mol d'ions OH^-, sans variation notable de volume.

1- Calculer le nouveau pH de la solution S. De combien ce pH a-t-il varié?

2-Calculer le nouveau pH de la solution S'. Cette solution S' s'est-elle comportée comme une solution tampon? Justifier.

D – On se propose d'étalonner une solution de soude NaOH par une solution d'acide oxalique $H_2C_2O_4$ (étalon primaire). Une fois étalonnée, la solution de soude servira pour titrer une solution d'acide chlorhydrique HCl et une solution d'acide acétique CH_3COOH. Dans tous ces titrages, on utilise la phénolphtaléine comme indicateur coloré.

- Quel(s) réactif(s) est-il plus convenable de placer dans la burette? Justifier.
- L'agitation de la solution dans le vase de titrage a lieu manuellement. Quel type de vase de titrage doit-on utiliser dans ce cas? Pourquoi?
- Pour le réactif à placer dans le vase de titrage, on a besoin de mesurer un volume de 10 mL. On dispose de la verrerie suivante, de capacité 10 mL : Pipette graduée, pipette, cylindre gradué. Quel type de verrerie doit-on utiliser? Pourquoi?
- Toute la verrerie à utiliser dans ces titrages doit être rendue propre et convenable à l'usage qu'on doit en faire, en lui effectuant différents rinçages. En considérant la verrerie utilisée dans l'étalonnage de la soude, dire pour chaque type, quel(s) genre(s) de rinçage doit-il subir. Justifier.

VIII- A- Les alcools réagissent avec les acides pour donner les esters et de l'eau. La réaction est catalysée par l'acide sulfurique concentré.

1) Expliquer pourquoi l'ester n'est pas habituellement formé en solutions aqueuses diluées.
2) Ecrire l'équation–bilan de la réaction générale d'estérification lorsqu'un alcool (RO^*H) ($O^* = {}^{18}O$) est utilisé, en montrant clairement où O^* apparaît dans les produits. Expliquer .
3) H_2SO_4 joue un double rôle dans la catalyse de l'estérification. Quel est-il?
4) Quel est l'ordre de la réactivité des alcools primaires, secondaires et tertiaires. Expliquer.

B- L'éthanol réagit avec l'acide sulfurique pour donner des produits différents, suivant les conditions de la réaction.

1) Montrer le produit obtenu lorsque la réaction est effectuée à :
   a- 140 °C
   b- 180 °C
2) Montrer le mécanisme de formation du produit dans chaque cas.
3) Est-ce que l'alcool tertiobuthylique réagit-il de la même manière ? Expliquer.

IX- Données: Masses molaires en $g.mol^{-1}$:
Hydrogène = 1 ; Carbone = 12 ; Oxygène = 16

Enoncé: Pour fabriquer un savon mou d'huile de coco, on saponifie un corps gras, le triglycéride de l'acide laurique, par de la potasse.
L'acide laurique est un monoacide saturé à 12 atomes de carbone.
La potasse est un solide blanc qui donne une base forte ($K^+ + OH^-$) en solution dans l'eau.
Parmi les propositions suivantes, lesquelles sont exactes ? Jistifier

A. La masse molaire de l'acide laurique est 200 $g.\ mol^{-1}$;
B. La formule brute du corps gras est $C_{39}H_{74}O_3$;
C. Le mécanisme de saponification fait intervenir le site nucléophile de la potasse ;
D. La réaction de saponification produit un trialcool ;
E. Le caractère détergent du savon est dû au caractère hydrophile de la chaîne carbonée.

X- Répondre aux questions suivantes:

A- Certains moteurs d'auto sont formés de polymères . Ces polymères sont-ils thermodurcissables ou thermolastiques ? Expliquer .

B- En supposant qu'une prise d'essai d'une protéine est complètement hydrolysée et une autre prise d'essai de la même protéine est dénaturée, comparer les produits finaux de ces deux processus. Expliquer .

C- Il existe un carbohydrate qui est legèrement soluble dans l'eau, qui n'a pas un goût sucré mais qui se dissout lentement quand il est chauffé dans une solution diluée de HCl. A quelle famille de carbohydrates appartient-il .

D- Lorsqu'une personne , avec une dent fourrée d'un morceau d'argent Ag, mord l'amballage en feuille d'aluminium d'un " chewing gum" , la salive se comporte comme un électrolyte. Le système est une pile électrochimique qui produit une légère sensation de douleur. Expliquer .

E- Citer deux differences essentielles entre un conducteur et une céramique supraconductrice.

بيروت، في ٢٠٠٤/٨/٩

اللجنة الفاحصة

مجلس الخدمة المدنية
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مسابقة في الاختصاص المطلوب
الاختصاص:اللغة الانكليزية وآدابها

الوقت: اربع ساعات

War

Luigi Pirandello

Italy, 1918

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Luigi Pirandello (1867–1936) was born near Girgenti, on the island of Sicily. He left Sicily at the age of twenty to study law. His interest changed to literature and, following further study in Germany, Pirandello returned to Rome to become a writer. After his family lost their fortune in 1903, he found it necessary to become a teacher to support his wife and children. To add to his income, he began to write prolifically. From 1916 to 1924, he wrote twenty-eight works for the theater. His plays, including Six Characters in Search of an Author *(1921), have had a profound influence on modern drama. In 1926, he established his own touring theater company. In 1934, he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature.*

THE CONTEXT OF THE STORY

The story takes place on a train in Italy during World War I (1914–1918). Italy entered the war in 1915.

The passengers who had left Rome by the night express had had to stop until dawn at the small station of Fabriano in order to continue their journey by the small old-fashioned local joining the main line with Sulmona.

At dawn, in a stuffy and smoky second-class carriage in which five people had already spent the night, a bulky woman in deep mourning was hoisted in—almost like a shapeless bundle. Behind her, puffing and moaning, followed her husband—a tiny man, thin and weakly, his face death-white, his eyes small and bright and looking shy and uneasy.

Having at last taken a seat he politely thanked the passengers who had helped his wife and who had made room for her; then he turned round to the woman trying to pull down the collar of her coat, and politely inquired:

"Are you all right, dear?"

The wife, instead of answering, pulled up her collar again to her eyes, so as to hide her face.

"Nasty world," muttered the husband with a sad smile.

And he felt it his duty to explain to his traveling companions that the poor woman was to be pitied, for the war was taking away from her her only son, a boy of twenty to whom both had devoted their entire life, even breaking up their home at Sulmona to follow him to Rome, where he had to go as a student, then allowing him to volunteer for war with an assurance, however, that at least for six months he would not be sent to the front and now, all of a sudden, receiving a wire saying that he was due to leave in three days' time and asking them to go and see him off.

The woman under the big coat was twisting and wriggling, at times growling like a wild animal, feeling certain that all those explanations would not have aroused even a shadow of sympathy from those people who—most likely—were in the same plight as herself. One of them, who had been listening with particular attention, said:

"You should thank God that your son is only leaving now for the front. Mine has been sent there the first day of the war. He has already come back twice wounded and been sent back again to the front."

"What about me? I have two sons and three nephews at the front," said another passenger.

"Maybe, but in our case it is our *only* son," ventured the husband.

"What difference can it make? You may spoil your only son with excessive attentions, but you cannot love him more than you would all your other children if you had any. Paternal love is not like bread that can be broken into pieces and split amongst the children in equal shares. A father gives *all* his love to each one of his children without discrimination, whether it be one or ten, and if I am suffering now for my two sons, I am not suffering half for each of them but double . . ."

"True . . . true . . ." sighed the embarrassed husband, "but suppose (of course we all hope it will never be your case) a father has two sons at the front and he loses one of them, there is still one left to console him . . . while . . ."

"Yes," answered the other, getting cross, "a son left to console him but also a son left for whom he must survive, while in the case of the father of an only son if the son dies the father can die too and put an end to his distress. Which of the two positions is the worse? Don't you see how my case would be worse than yours?"

"Nonsense," interrupted another traveler, a fat, red-faced man with bloodshot eyes of the palest gray.

He was panting. From his bulging eyes seemed to spurt inner violence of an uncontrolled vitality which his weakened body could hardly contain.

"Nonsense," he repeated, trying to cover his mouth with his hand so as to hide the two missing front teeth. "Nonsense. Do we give life to our children for our own benefit?"

The other travelers stared at him in distress. The one who had had his son at the front since the first day of the war sighed: "You are right. Our children do not belong to us, they belong to the Country. . . ."

"Bosh," retorted the fat traveler. "Do we think of the Country when we give life to our children? Our sons are born because . . . well, because they must be born and when they come to life they take our own life with them. This is the truth. We belong to them but they never belong to us. And when they reach twenty they are exactly what we were at their age. We too had a father and mother, but there were so many other things as well . . . girls, cigarettes, illusions, new ties . . . and the Country, of course, whose call we would have answered—when we were twenty—even if father and mother had said no. Now at our age, the love of our Country is still great, of course, but stronger than it is the love for our children. Is there any one of us here who wouldn't gladly take his son's place at the front if he could?"

There was a silence all around, everybody nodding as to approve.

"Why then," continued the fat man, "shouldn't we consider the feelings of our children when they are twenty? Isn't it natural that at their age they should consider the love for their Country (I am speaking of decent boys, of course) even greater than the love for us? Isn't it natural that it should be so, as after all they must look upon us as upon old boys who cannot move any more and must stay at home? If Country exists, if Country is a natural necessity, like bread, of which each of us must eat in order not to die of hunger, somebody must go to defend it. And our sons go, when they are twenty, and they don't want tears, because if they die, they die inflamed and happy (I am speaking, of course, of decent boys). Now, if one dies young and happy, without having the ugly sides of life, the boredom of it, the pettiness, the bitterness of disillusion . . . what more can we ask for him? Everyone should stop crying; everyone should laugh, as I do . . . or at least thank God—as I do—because my son, before dying, sent me a message saying that he was dying satisfied at having ended his life in the best way he could have wished. That is why, as you see, I do not even wear mourning. . . ."

He shook his light fawn coat as to show it; his livid lip over his missing teeth was trembling, his eyes were watery and motionless, and soon after he ended with a shrill laugh which might well have been a sob.

"Quite so . . . quite so . . ." agreed the others.

The woman who, bundled in a corner under her coat, had been sitting and listening had—for the last three months—tried to find in the words of her husband and her friends something to console her in her deep sorrow, something that might show her how a mother should resign herself to send her son not even to death but to a probably dangerous life. Yet not a word had she found amongst the many which had been said . . . and her grief had been greater in seeing that nobody—as she thought—could share her feelings.

But now the words of the traveler amazed and almost stunned her. She suddenly realized that it wasn't the others who were wrong and could not understand her but herself who could not rise up to the same height of those fathers and mothers willing to resign themselves, without crying, not only to the departure of their sons but even to their death.

She lifted her head, she bent over from her corner trying to listen with great attention to the details which the fat man was giving to his companions about the way his son had fallen as a hero, for his King and his Country, happy and without regrets. It seemed to her that she had stumbled into a world she had never dreamt of, a world so far unknown to her and she was so pleased to hear everyone joining in congratulating that brave father who could so stoically speak of his child's death.

Then suddenly, just as if she had heard nothing of what had been said and almost as if waking up from a dream, she turned to the old man, asking him:

"Then . . . is your son really dead?"

Everybody stared at her. The old man, too, turned to look at her, fixing his great, bulging, horribly watery light gray eyes, deep in her face. For some little time he tried to answer, but words failed him. He looked and looked at her, almost as if only then—at that silly, incongruous question—he had suddenly realized at last that his son was really dead—gone for ever—for ever. His face contracted, became horribly distorted, then he snatched in haste a handkerchief from his pocket and, to the amazement of everyone, broke into harrowing, heart-rending, uncontrollable sobs.

Translated by Michele Pettinati.

After reading the short story entitled "War", answer the following questions:

Part One: Comprehension

A. Identify the main ideas presented in the story.
B. Why do you think the author leaves the characters nameless?
C. What is the significance of the woman's question "Then... is your son really dead?"

Part Two: Literary Analysis

A. Identify two metaphors and two similes and discuss their effects on the story.
B. Give a character sketch of the woman in the story (70-100 words).
C. Comment on the use of language (diction and sentence structure) in the fat man's speech: "Why then,...wear mourning..."

Part Three: Study Skills

A. In your own words, summarize the story in no more than 150 words.
B. How does the introduction about the author help you appreciate the story?

Part Four: Writing

Using between 300- 450 words, write a well organized essay on the following topic:
The disintegration of the family is becoming a serious threat to the social fabric of our culture. Discuss, explaining the reasons and suggesting ways that teachers could use to counter this threat. Provide an outline.

بيروت، في ٢٠٠٤/٨/١١

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