

Corrigé École des chartes : anglais oral 2021, Williams

Proposition de corrigé — non officielle. Banque de textes d'anglais oral 2021 de l'École des chartes : extrait de *A Streetcar Named Desire*, troisième page. Présentation, commentaire et repères linguistiques pour cet extrait.

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Ce corrigé porte sur l'**extrait de Tennessee Williams, *A Streetcar Named Desire* (1947)**, à la troisième page de la banque de textes d'anglais oral 2021 de l'École des chartes. Les autres textes du fichier ne sont pas traités ici. La pièce ne fournit pas de questionnaire : la proposition prend donc la forme d'une présentation et d'un commentaire en anglais.

Présentation possible en anglais

This passage from Tennessee Williams's *A Streetcar Named Desire* gives Blanche a retrospective voice. She recalls her first love, a painful discovery and the death of her young husband, Allan. Yet the main interest is not simply what happened: it is how a remembered event takes over a present performance.

I would examine the contrast between revelation and misunderstanding, then the transformation of the account by sound and gesture, and finally the limits of Blanche's explanation of her own responsibility.

I. Understanding comes too late

Blanche speaks from two positions at once: the young woman who did not understand, and the speaker who tries to interpret the past. Repeated admissions of ignorance make that gap audible. They are not merely redundant; they interrupt a narrative that might otherwise appear settled.

The image of light initially associates love with sudden revelation. The metaphor of quicksand then changes the relationship into a situation where neither person can support the other. These images give emotional experience a spatial form. The audience can imagine both the intensity of love and the fear of losing any secure ground.

The passage also invites attention to Blanche's expectations about masculinity. The way she describes softness and nervousness reveals the standards through which she judged Allan. Her vocabulary belongs to her perspective; it should not be adopted as an objective definition of what a man must be. The scene of discovery is left unfinished rather than fully explained, preserving the difficulty of saying what she has seen.

II. The theatre makes memory present

The stage directions are essential. The locomotive's sound and light interrupt Blanche's speech, while her physical reaction makes distress visible. The account is therefore not a continuous speech that could be read apart from the performance. Body, lighting and sound participate in its meaning.

The polka links the present stage to the remembered dance. Its interruption at the moment of the gunshot and its subsequent return complicate the relation between past and present. Memory is not only reported: an associated sound returns around the speaker. The audience experiences that recurrence while listening to her words.

Broken sentences, exclamations and dashes similarly disrupt the narrative. They can suggest hesitation, shock or an effort to continue speaking. The final contrast between the former light and the small kitchen candle closes the imagery of illumination. Love once enlarged Blanche's world; its loss has changed the scale of what she can bear or hope for.

III. A confession does not settle causation

Blanche presents her expression of disgust as the cause of Allan's death. This is crucial to her sense of guilt, but it remains her retrospective account. A careful commentary distinguishes what she says from a complete explanation endorsed by the playwright. The excerpt gives access to suffering and self-accusation; it does not establish a general rule about suicide or make a single utterance its sufficient cause.

The form also complicates the authority of the speaker. Her confession can make her sympathetic without making every interpretation she offers final. The audience is invited to attend to her vulnerability, the social expectations she expresses and the limits of her understanding. The scene's force comes from this tension between disclosure and uncertainty.

Conclusion possible

The passage turns a recollection into a theatrical event. Images of light, interrupted speech, bodily reactions and music connect Blanche's present voice to a painful past. Williams does not simply provide information about a former marriage: he shows a speaker struggling to give that experience meaning. The distinction between her guilt and an objective account of causation prevents the confession from becoming a simplistic explanation.

Vocabulaire et lecture

Expression	Sens dans le passage
blinding light	Lumière aveuglante ; image d'une révélation intense.
quicksands	Sables mouvants ; métaphore d'un enlèvement où l'aide devient impossible.
to clutch	Agripper, se cramponner.
to crouch	S'accroupir, se recroqueviller.
to sway	Vaciller, osciller.

Pour distinguer les temps, le prétérit raconte des événements ; le plus-que-parfait situe certaines actions avant d'autres faits passés. Les didascalies au présent décrivent l'action scénique. La lecture à

voix haute gagne à distinguer ces indications du discours de Blanche et à laisser les interruptions produire leur effet.