Advanced Higher French

Le silence de la mer

Vercors
# Contents

Timescales .................................................................................. 3
Questions on each section of *Le Silence de la Mer* ......................... 5
The Plot ......................................................................................... 9
Werner von Ebrennac .................................................................. 10
The Uncle ..................................................................................... 14
The Niece ...................................................................................... 17
Themes .......................................................................................... 22
Symbolism ..................................................................................... 24
Glossary ......................................................................................... 25
Résumé of *Le Silence de la Mer* .................................................. 51
Questions on *Le Silence de la Mer* ............................................... 52
Folio Essay titles ........................................................................... 54
Suggested resources ....................................................................... 55
Timescales

Week 1
You may have chosen to read the book in English over the holidays, but you must now focus on the French text as you will be required to complete the Specialist Study Unit prior to writing the essay for your folio. Your teacher will give you guidelines on how to complete this unit and he/she may also give you some examples of a completed Specialist Study Unit and a log book to use to write up your findings. You will find the examples on the following link:
http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/75796.html

The first thing you have to do is choose an aspect of the novel on which to focus. You may wish to choose one of the essay titles for the folio (see page 57) and use that as your focus. You will then create a plan outlining the resources you are going to use and a possible timescale. You should now read the book in French. Use the timescale and activities below to help you manage your time. Remember to highlight key passages and quotes from the text that are relevant to your chosen focus.

Now read pages 17-26 of the book and write a summary of the main points covered in each section in English. Answer the questions on these sections of the book (see page 5)

Week 2
Read pages 27-38 and write a summary of the main points covered in each section in English. Answer the questions on these sections of the book (see page 5)

Week 3
Read pages 41-51 and write a summary of the main points covered in each section in English. Answer the questions on these sections of the book (see page 5)

Week 4
Read the notes on the characters in the book (pages 10-20) Make notes describing each character. Look at the key points you have noted, and find adjectives to describe each character in French
Week 5
Look at the resume of the plot in French, and make sure you understand it. You should learn it thoroughly, so that you can speak fluently on the content of the book in French. Discuss any difficulties you are having with pronunciation with your teacher or the French assistant. You may even want to record it on your phone (or ask the assistant to do it for you). That will enable you to listen to the resume whenever you want. Not only will it help your pronunciation, but it will go a long way to preparing you for your oral exam in February/March.

Week 6
Look at the questions in French, and answer them as fully as you can. This pack of materials will help you do that, and your teacher or the French assistant will give you extra help. You may also want to record them as this will help you prepare for your oral exam in February/March.

Week 7-9
You are now ready to look at other sources in your plan. These could include a literary criticism of the book; some background information about the French Resistance or the author or the film of the book, but note that the film contains some scenes which are not in the book. One of these sources must be in French but the others can be in English.

Week 10
Complete your Specialist Study Unit and hand in your log book to the teacher. The teacher will award it a pass or fail. If you pass the Specialist Study Unit you are now ready to write your folio essay.
Questions on each section of *Le Silence de la Mer*

**Pages 17 – 18**

Read pages 17 -18

a) Describe the events leading up to the arrival of the German officer.
b) How does the narrator react to these events?

**Pages 19 -21**

Now read pages 19 -21

a) Why do you think the uncle and the niece refuse to speak to Werner von Ebrennac when he arrives?
b) How does Werner react to their silence?
c) What kind of person do you think Werner von Ebrennac is? Give two details to support your answer.
d) What does the narrator think of Werner von Ebrennac? Give reasons to support your answer.

**Pages 22 – 26**

Now read pages 22 - 26

a) How does Werner von Ebrennac feel about living in the house with the uncle and his niece?
b) Why do you think Werner von Ebrennac continues to visit the uncle and his niece every evening?
c) They have no intention of talking to him. Why do you think they allow him to continue to visit them each evening?
d) How did the uncle feel when Werner did not arrive at his usual time?
e) Why did Werner von Ebrennac change his clothes when he arrived that evening?
f) In what way did Werner’s relationship with the uncle and the niece change that evening? Give details.
g) How does Werner feel about France? Why had he never visited France?
h) What is his vision for France and Germany?
i) How does the uncle feel about Werner?
j) What is the niece’s reaction?

Pages 27 -30

Now read pages 27-30

a) Why does Werner von Ebrennac choose to change his clothes before coming downstairs to visit the uncle and the niece?
b) What excuse does he make for coming downstairs every evening?
c) Are the uncle and his niece taken in by this excuse? Explain your answer.
d) What does he talk to them about?
e) What does Werner’s enthusiasm for French literature and German music tell the reader about him? Why is this important to him?
f) Why does he tell the uncle and the niece he is happy about their attitude towards him?
g) Why is the niece embarrassed?
h) Why do you think Werner von Ebrennac tells the story of Beauty and the Beast?

Pages 31-32

Now read pages 31-32

a) What does the uncle think when he hears the harmonium being played?
b) How does he feel when he sees it is Werner von Ebrennac who is playing?
c) What does Werner von Ebrennac say he has learned from living in France?
d) Why is it so important to him that he is accepted by France and the French people?
e) What do you think he means by “Les obstacles seront surmontés”?
Now read pages 33-36

a) The uncle says he admires Werner von Ebrennac. Why does he admire him?
b) Why do the uncle and niece feel uncomfortable?
c) How does the reader know that the niece is struggling to deal with the situation?
d) What personal details does Werner von Ebrennac give the reader in this section of the book? Why do you think this is important?
e) How does Werner von Ebrennac feel when he arrives in Chartres?
f) What is the significance of the story of the walk in the woods with his fiancée?
g) What is the niece’s reaction to this story?
h) How does the reader know that Werner von Ebrennac is not like other Nazis?

Now read pages 37-38

a) Werner von Ebrennac reads an extract from Macbeth. What is the significance of this?
b) What important piece of information does Werner von Ebrennac give the uncle and the niece?
c) How does Werner von Ebrennac feel about this?
d) What tells the reader he is an idealist?

Now read the last section of the book

a) When Werner von Ebrennac returns from Paris, the uncle and the niece do not see him for more than a week. How do they feel about this?
b) Describe what happens when the uncle has to go to the German headquarters.
c) Why does the niece wish to go to bed early that evening?
d) Why is the uncle angry?
e) Describe Werner von Ebrennac’s approach to them three days later.

f) How does the author build up a feeling of suspense?

g) In what way is Werner von Ebrennac’s behaviour different from that of other evenings?

h) How do the uncle and niece react to this?

i) Why do you think Werner von Ebrennac is once again dressed in his uniform?
The Plot

The plot is the word used to describe what happens in the book. In *Le Silence de la Mer*, the story line is fairly straightforward.

The book tells the story of a German officer, Werner von Ebrennac, who, during the German occupation of France in the Second World War, is forced to spend seven months in the house of an old man and his niece. During his time in the house, Werner von Ebrennac visits the old man and his niece every evening, and speaks to them not only about his love for their country, but also about his passion for music and literature. He also explains to them that he eventually wants to see a union of the two countries.

The uncle and the niece listen politely to what Werner von Ebrennac has to say, but never answer him or address him in any way, because that is the only way they can express their patriotism for France, and show their hatred towards the occupying forces.

However, during the course of the novel, the reader becomes aware of a growing passion between Werner von Ebrennac and the niece, although she continues to remain silent and stubborn.

When Werner von Ebrennac goes to Paris on leave, he discovers that his compatriots do not share the same beliefs or ideals as he does, and that any co-operation between the two countries is merely a ploy to help destroy French culture which the Germans see as a threat to Nazism in Europe.

He returns to the uncle and niece’s house disillusioned, and announces to them that he has asked to be transferred to the Eastern front line. He informs his hosts of his decision, and tells them of his imminent departure, telling them why he has made that decision. It is at that point that the niece breaks her silence for the first and last time, and says goodbye to him, showing her true feelings for the German officer.

You will find a resume of the plot in French on page 42 of this booklet.
Characters

There are only three characters in this novel. They are Werner von Ebrennac, the uncle, and the niece.

Werner von Ebrennac

Werner von Ebrennac is the main character in the novel. The reader learns a lot about his character from the way he behaves and what he says in the book.

The first impression the reader has of Werner von Ebrennac is when he arrives at the uncle and niece’s house for the first time. A lot of activity has preceded his arrival, and the reader’s curiosity is aroused as to who this German officer actually is. The expectation is that he will be met with a negative reaction from the occupants of the house as Werner von Ebrennac has been forced upon them as a compulsory lodger by the occupying German force in France, and this colours the reader’s view slightly.

However, when he finally arrives, he is presented in a positive light by the narrator of the story (the uncle) who describes his appearance in minute detail.

Werner is polite from the first moment of his arrival. The first words he utters are “S’il vous plait” (p19). He removes his coat and smiles discreetly at the niece, and then turns to the uncle and introduces himself. “Je me nomme Werner von Ebrennac” (p19) and then goes on to apologise for the inconvenience that his enforced stay might cause the uncle and the niece “Je suis désolé” (p19) and “Cela était naturellement nécessaire. J’eusse évité si cela était possible” (p20). Werner von Ebrennac comes across as a polite, cultured individual with whom the reader can identify and sympathise. The fact that he smiles several times during the initial meeting reinforces this impression.

“Il se tourna vers ma nièce, sourire discrètement en inclinant très légèrement le buste” (p19)

“…je visse naitre un sourire sur ses lèvres. Son sourire était grave et sans nulle trace d’ironie” (p20)
His behaviour towards the uncle and the niece on the first morning after his arrival reinforces this impression. He comes downstairs into the kitchen, and tells them he had a good night’s sleep, and hopes they had had slept just as well. He is described as smiling on two occasions on p22.

He also compliments them on their house saying he is happy that he was not billeted at the castle on the hill as he should have been, “Ici est un beaucoup plus beau château” (p22).

On his return to the house that evening, he again apologises for disturbing them “Je crains que je vous dérange, dit-il” (p22) and suggests they lock the door and he can go through the kitchen. However, the uncle and the niece do not do this, and Werner von Ebrennac continues to visit them in the evening. He is always described by the uncle as smiling, half-smiling, or taking pleasure in what he sees. His demeanour is in stark contrast to the stern, stubborn demeanour of the niece, and this shows Werner von Ebrennac in a positive light.

At first he only talks about trivial things like the weather or the temperature which demand no reply in return and always ends each of his monologues with the words “Je vous souhaite une bonne nuit”. Suddenly, one evening things change quite dramatically. This change follows a change in the weather, and Werner von Ebrennac does not appear at his usual time. When he finally does arrive, he is not in uniform. This change of appearance highlights to the reader that he is in fact a normal person, and not an enemy officer. The content of what he says also changes at this point in the text, and becomes much more personal. This draws not only the reader towards him, but also the uncle and the niece.

On page 24 he begins to talk about the difference in the winters in France and Germany, and in doing so show the marked contrast between the two countries, not only in physical terms, but also in terms of the mentality of the people. The winter in France is described as “une douce saison”, but in Germany “c’est bien dur”. In France the snow lies like a piece of lace on delicate trees, whilst in Germany the trees are fir tightly packed together, on which the snow lies heavily. Germany is described as a sturdy, powerful bull which needs force to live, whereas in France it is the spirit and the subtle, poetic thoughts which are important. This shows the reader that he has an idealistic picture of France, and that is further emphasised when he goes on to tell them of the great vision he has for France, (similar to that of his father) that one day France and Germany will be united like husband and wife. “Il va
nous unir, comme mari et femme” (p25), and “Je crois que de ceci il sortira des grandes choses” (p26).

He describes France as “la Princesse Lointaine” on page 25. This reference mirrors the behaviour of the niece towards Werner von Ebrennac, and is the first of several similar references in the book. This vision he has for France and Germany is mirrored in the relationship between Werner von Ebrennac and the niece. As he speaks he looks at her “En parlant il regardait ma nièce” (p25), but she refuses to look at him or respond to him in any way.

He is aware that he may have hurt his hosts feelings by talking of such matters, but he assures them that it is his true belief “Mais ce que je disais, je le pense avec un très bon coeur: je le pense par amour pour la France” (p26). There is great sincerity in what Werner von Ebrennac believes, and this makes the reader sympathise with him, although his views are idealistic and naïve. The contrast between his idealism and the reality he experiences in Paris makes this all the more poignant.

Werner von Ebrennac is a cultured man. The reader has already learned that he is a musician on page 25. He is well read and has a sound knowledge of French literature, as can be seen from his interest in the library of books the uncle and niece have. He again makes a contrast between France and Germany. France has the great writers but Germany has the great musicians, and he again shows his naivety when he talks about the union of the two countries, using the imagery of marriage to indicate this “Nous nous battrons plus: nous nous marierons” (pp28-29).

His attention focuses once more on the niece. He tells us that he is happy to have met resistance “…je suis heureux de son visage sévère” (p29) and further on “Je suis heureux d’avoir trouvé ici un vieil home digne. Et une demoiselle silencieuse”, but that he would be pleased to break the silence, and therefore, the resistance of the French people. This again highlights his naivety and idealism.

This theme is continued when he recounts the story of Beauty and the Beast. This story symbolises that appearances can be deceptive, and underlines the growing feelings Werner von Ebrennac has towards the niece, although he realises that these feelings are not yet reciprocated, in the same way as Beauty initially abhors the Beast. This passage hints at how the relationship between the two will eventually end. It also symbolises the differences between the two countries. The reader’s sympathy is aroused when Werner von Ebrennac compares himself to
On pages 31-32, Werner von Ebrennac is described playing the harmonium. He plays Bach’s 8th Prelude and Fugue which the niece had been practising before the occupation, but has not touched since. When he finishes playing he tells his hosts that, although it is a great piece of music, it is not human, and this is likened to the German mentality: “Bach...Il ne pouvait être qu’allemand. Notre terre a ce caractère; ce caractère inhumain” (p31-32).

He goes on to tell them that he wants to compose his own music, something to which man can relate. That way he’ll be able to discover the truth. He says that it is only since he has come to live with them that he has realised this: “Je veux faire, moi, une musique à la mesure de l’homme...Depuis que je vis ici” (p32). This shows how idealistic Werner really is, and this impression is further reinforced on page 32 when he goes on to talk about needing France and the need to be welcomed by the country: “Maintenant j’ai besoin de la France. Mais je demande beaucoup: je demande qu’elle m’accueille” (p32). This is a plea to them to accept him, to stop resisting him, and, in particular, it is a plea to the niece to reciprocate his feelings. He again uses the imagery of a mother feeding her children and of marriage to highlight this wish: “Il faut la boire à son sein, il faut qu’elle vous offre son sein dans un mouvement et un sentiment maternels...qu’elle accepte de s’unir à nous” (p32).

He shows the reader his determination of pursuing this goal when he says he wants to live in France in a similar house, as a son of the village. And finishes by telling them: “‘Les obstacles seront surmontés’, dit-il. ‘La sincérité toujours surmonte les obstacles.’” (p32). This again indicates to the reader that he truly believes in his vision for the future of France and Germany.

On pages 33 and 34 he talks about his home in Germany and his travels. We learn that he has visited lots of European cities, but that his heart lies in the village in which he spent his childhood. He waxes lyrical about how destiny brought him to Chartres, and that he understands how the French must have felt when they arrived there in times gone by.

“J’imaginais les sentiments de ceux qui venaient jadis à elle, à pied, à cheval ou sur des chariots... Je partageais ses sentiments et j’aimais ces gens, et comme je voudrais être leur frère” (p34)
This shows how much he wishes to be accepted, and that shows him in a
good light, not only to the reader, but also to the uncle and niece. He
reiterates the fact that France can cure the German people of the
aspects of their character that Werner does not like. “Tant de choses
remuent ensemble dans l’âme d’un Allemand, même le meilleur! Et dont
il aimerait tant qu’on le guérisse…”(p34).

The negative traits of the German character are highlighted in the story
of the walk in the forest with his one time fiancée. Werner von Ebrennac
paints a very rosy picture of the scene, and how happy they both felt.
However, this ideal day is spoiled when his fiancée is bitten by a
mosquito. She then catches another one and punishes it by pulling its
legs off one by one. This act reflects the cruelty of the German
occupation of France, and the German quest to destroy French culture
which Werner von Ebrennac only becomes aware of when he visits Paris.
Werner’s naivety is again highlighted in this part of the text. He is
horrified at this act of barbarism, in the same way as he will be horrified
that his compatriots in Paris do not share his beliefs, and he renounces
not only his fiancée, but all German girls. This passage reflects exactly
what will happen in Paris when he renounces his compatriots and
decides to go to the eastern front.

The Uncle

Despite the fact the uncle does not speak in the novel, we learn a lot
about his character from the way in which he describes how he feels in
general, and, in particular, how he feels towards Werner von Ebrennac.

At the start of the novel, the uncle greets the news of Werner von
Ebrennac’s arrival with an air of resignation. He describes the
preparations for the officer’s arrival in a detached manner. “Ils me
parlèrent, dans ce qu’ils supposaient être du français. Je ne comprenais
pas un mot. Pourtant je leur montrai les chambres libres” (p17).

However, the uncle’s curiosity about, and interest in, the German officer
is aroused from the outset. This is shown from his very detailed
description of Werner von Ebrennac’s physical appearance on pages 19-
21.

The uncle seems positively disposed towards Werner von Ebrennac,
although he initially refers to him as “l’officier” and “l’Allemand”.
However, when Werner introduces himself, the uncle immediately
thinks his name does not sound German: “Le nom n’est pas allemand” (p19), giving the reader the impression that perhaps Werner von Ebrennac is not typical of his compatriots. This is further highlighted on page 22, when he remarks to his niece: “Dieu merci, il a l’air convenable”.

Although the uncle refuses to speak to Werner von Ebrennac, in a silent pact with his niece to demonstrate their resistance to the occupying forces, the reader is very aware that the uncle does not find this an easy thing to do. He almost seems to have a guilty conscience about it:

“D’un accord tacite nous avions décidé.....de ne rien changé à notre vie...comme si l’officier n’existait pas; comme s’il eût été un fantôme. Mais il se peut qu’un autre sentiment se mêlât dans mon coeur....: je ne puis sans souffrir offenser un homme, fût-il mon ennemi” (p23)

The uncle’s interest and curiosity in Werner von Ebrennac is further underlined on page 23 when he expresses his concern for the officer in the inclement weather: “Malgré moi, j’imaginais l’officier, dehors, l’aspect saupoudré qu’il aurait en entrant” and when he fails to appear that evening the uncle is preoccupied “...je m’agaçais de reconnaître qu’il occupait ma pensée”. The reader is again made aware that he does not find keeping up this silent treatment easy when he reproaches his niece for refusing to speak to the officer on page 26.

The uncle even goes as far as to say he admires Werner von Ebrennac on page 33 “Et, ma foi, je l’admirais. Oui: qu’il ne se décourageât pas. Et que jamais il ne fût tenté de secouer cet implacable silence par quelque violence de langage...”. The uncle obviously finds the silent protest that he and his niece are making difficult to handle. He says on page 33 that when the silence invaded the room, it was Werner von Ebrennac who seemed most at ease rather than them. It is at this point that the uncle also starts to use Werner von Ebrennac’s name in the text. He is no longer “l’officier” or “l’Allemand” as he was previously, and this shows the reader to what extent the uncle is drawn to Werner. It is also Werner who makes him breathe more easily when he finally breaks the silence.

When Werner reads the passage from Macbeth, the uncle realises in astonishment that he appears to share Werner’s sentiments “Je me demandais avec stupeur s’il pensait au même tyran que moi” (p37). Werner von Ebrennac leaves to go to Paris. On his return his hosts do not see him for more than a week. The uncle admits that his absence troubles him: “Cette absence ne me laissait pas l’esprit en repos. Je
pensais à lui, je ne sais pas jusqu’à quel point je n’éprouvais pas du regret, de l’inquiétude.” (p41).

During that week the uncle has to go to the German headquarters, and while he is there, he sees Werner von Ebrennac. He admits he hangs about to see if he is noticed, although he does not really know why he is doing it. “J’entendais sa voix sourde aux inflections chantantes et je restais là, bien que je n’eussé plus rien à y faire, sans savoir pourquoi, curieusement ému, attendant je ne sais quel dénouement” (p41).

That evening his niece is aware that something has happened, but the uncle does not share with her that he saw Werner von Ebrennac that day. Eventually she excuses herself and goes to bed. The uncle reacts emotively at this point to the absurd situation in which all three of them find themselves. “Après son départ je me sentis soulevé par une absurde colère: la colère d’être absurde et d’avoir une nièce absurde. Qu’est-ce que c’était que toute cette idiotie?” (p42).

Werner von Ebrennac eventually appears one evening, and the uncle’s description of his approach builds up the tension felt by all the characters. The uncle pictures Werner behind the door ready to knock on it, but he is filled with apprehension. When Werner knocks, but does not open the door, the uncle is filled with an inexplicable feeling of agitation “mais elle resta close, et alors je fus envahi par une incoercible agitation d’esprit....” (p43). Eventually he tells Werner to come in. The fact that he adds the word “Monsieur” shows how far his attitude to Werner has changed from their first meeting. He now sees him as the man and not as the enemy “Pourquoi ajoutai-je: Monsieur? Pour marquer que j’invitais l’homme et non l’officier ennemi?” (p44).

The very detailed description of Werner’s appearance and demeanour mirror the description of his physical appearance when he first arrived, and the detail shows how much Werner von Ebrennac is struggling to cope with the fact his compatriots do not share his vision for France and Germany. He feels his ideals have been betrayed, and he is struggling to contain his emotions. The uncle makes this clear in his observations of Werner von Ebrennac when he says on page 44 “J’appris ce jour-là qu’une main peut...réfléter les émotions aussi bien qu’un visage, - aussi bien et mieux qu’un visage car elle échappe avantage au contrôle de la volonté“.

He listens intently as Werner tells them that there is no hope left for France any more, and that he will leave for the Eastern front. The last
image of him, as described by the uncle is one of him smiling. However, when the uncle comes down for breakfast the next morning Werner von Ebrennac has gone. He describes the pale sun through the morning mist and tells the reader that it looks to him as if it is going to be really cold “Il me sembla qu’il faisait très froid” (p51) as if Werner von Ebrennac has taken with him all hope. It also suggests impending death, and hence, the novel ends on a pessimistic note.

The Niece

The niece like her uncle does not speak, but we learn a lot about her character through her gestures and actions, and also from the observations her uncle makes in the course of the narration.

The reader’s first impressions of the niece are of someone who resents the intrusion on her private life, and someone who is very apprehensive about how the situation is going to affect her life.

When she and her uncle hear Werner von Ebrennac coming back to the house on the first evening she looks at her uncle and puts down her cup. This indicates that she is nervous and a bit tense. “Ma niece me regarda et posa sa tasse.” (p19).

At first she appears to be totally indifferent to the German officer. Her actions on his arrival highlight her feelings. When he knocks on the door she answers it, but remains silent and acts almost as if there was no-one there.

“Elle avait rabattu la porte sur le mur, elle se tenait elle-même contre le mur sans rien regarder” (p19)

“Ma niece avait fermé la porte et resté adossée au mur, regardant droit devant elle” (p19)

When he asks to be shown to his room she again acts as if there was no-one else there: “Ma niece ouvrit la porte...et commença de gravir les marches, sans un regard pour l’officier, comme si elle eut été seule” (p20).

She seems determined not to allow herself to be charmed by the German officer. When her uncle remarks that he seems pleasant enough, her reaction is one of indifference “Ma nièce haussa les épaules” (p21).
Her uncle describes her on page 23 as “immanquablement sévère et insensible” or on page 25 as a statue.

Even when the uncle suggests that it is perhaps cruel to refuse to speak to the officer, the niece remains indignant “Elle haussait très haut les sourcils, sur des yeux brillants et indignés” (p26). She continues to appear unaffected by what Werner von Ebrennac has to say. She refuses to look at him, although he tries to make eye contact with her several times: “Son regard se porta sur le mien…puis retourna sur le visage, impitoyablement insensible, qu’il avait quitté” (p29).

However, as the novel progresses, the reader becomes aware of small, but marked changes in her reaction towards Werner von Ebrennac. Much as she wishes to remain indifferent to him, she becomes more and more drawn towards him. The first indication of a softening in her attitude is when he says on page 29: “Il faudra vaincre ce silence. Il faudra vaincre le silence de la France. Cela me plaît”.

This seems to affect her quite considerably. For the first time, the reader feels that she, herself, thinks she is perhaps being a bit hard on the German officer. Not only does she blush, but a slight frown begins to appear, and she pulls almost too tightly on her thread almost breaking it.

“Je la voyais légèrement rougir……Ses doigts tiraient un peu trop vivement, trop sèchement sur l’aiguille, au risque de rompre le fil” (p29)

The uncle also senses a change in his niece’s attitude when he remarks a little further on:

“Et moi je sentais l’âme de ma nièce s’agiter dans cette prison qu’elle avait elle-même construite, je le voyais à bien des signes dont le moindre était un léger tremblement des doigts” (p33).

The fact that the niece is becoming more and more enamoured by Werner von Ebrennac is very obvious when he starts to talk about his former fiancé on page 34: “Il attendit, pour continuer, que ma nièce eût enfilé de nouveau le fil qu’elle venait de casser…”.

When Werner comes back from his leave in Paris, he does not spend time with his hosts as he normally would. This not only bothers the uncle, but it also bothers his niece. Although they do not speak to each other about it, the uncle is aware that Werner’s absence is having the same effect on his niece as it is having on him. “…je voyais bien, à l’application
têtue qu’elle mettait soudain à son ouvrage… qu’elle non plus n’était pas exempte de pensées pareilles aux miennes” (p41).

The niece is also preoccupied after the uncle’s meeting with Werner in the German headquarters. Although the uncle does not tell her about it, she seems to sense that he is keeping something from her, and is unable to concentrate on her work “Mais les femmes ont une divination de félin. Tout au long de la soirée elle ne cessa de lever les yeux de son ouvrage…pour les porter sur moi; pour tenter de lire quelque chose…. ” (p42).

Finally she claims she has a migraine, and asks to go to bed early “A la fin, elle laissa tomber ses mains…me demanda la permission de s’aller coucher de bonne heure…“(p42). She appears to reproach her uncle and for the first time she shows emotion “Elle m’embrassa et il me sembla lire dans ses beaux yeux gris un reproche et une assez pesante tristesse” (p42).

Three days after this incident they hear Werner coming downstairs. The weather has been wet and damp, and the niece has a shawl around her shoulders. The shawl shows ten linked hands (p42). This is very symbolic, as it mirrors Ebrennac’s vision for the union of France and Germany, and seems to indicate that the niece in some ways shares this vision, although she would never dare vocalise her thoughts.

The niece’s reaction to Werner’s approach is very telling: “Ma nièce avait levé la tête et elle me regardait, elle attacha sur moi…un regard transparent et inhumaine de grand-duc” (p43) and when he finally reaches the last step, she appears to relax “Et quand la dernière marche eût crié…le regard de ma nièce s’envola, je vis les paupières s’allourdir, la tête s’incliner...(p43).

However, Werner knocks the door, but instead of entering the room as he usually does, he waits. This sudden change of habit confuses the uncle, and he looks to his niece for help, but finds none. She too is startled by this sudden change: “Elle regardait le bouton de la porte. Elle le regardait avec cette fixité inhumaine de grand-duc…elle était très pâle et je vis…se lever la lèvre supérieure dans une contraction douloureuse” (p43).

This shows the reader to what extent she has been affected by Werner’s presence in the house. The uncle also realises for the first time that his
niece has fallen in love with the German officer “et moi, devant ce drame intime soudain dévoilé... je perdis mes dernières forces” (p43).

Eventually, the niece tells her uncle that if no-one tells him to come in, he will leave, but it is her voice that betrays her emotion “Il va partir...d’une voix basse et si complètement découragé...” (pp43-44).

The uncle tells Werner to come in, and when he does he is dressed once more in his military uniform. He tells them he has something serious to say to them. When he says this, the niece faces him but keeps her head bowed, but again it is her actions which betray her emotion. “Elle enroulait autour de ses doigts la laine d’une pelote, tandis que la pelote se défaisait en roulant sur le tapis..... (p45).

Werner von Ebrennac tells them they have to forget everything that has been said in the last six months, and it is at this point that she looks at Werner for the first time “...elle leva la tête, et alors, pour la première fois, - pour la première fois- elle offrit à l’officier le regard de ses yeux pâles” (p45). The significance of this gesture is underlined by the fact that the words “pour la première fois” are repeated in the sentence.

Werner tells them his compatriots do not share the same vision as he does for the future of France and Germany, and that he has asked to be transferred to the Eastern front, to hell, where the wheat fields of the future will be nourished by the corpses of fallen soldiers (p50). The niece is very upset, “Le visage de ma nièce me fit peine. Il était d’une pâleur lunaire. Les lèvres...étaient disjointes, elles esquissaient la moue tragique des masques grecs.” (p50).

A few lines on, the uncle is aware of beads of sweat, not just beginning to appear on her forehead, but almost standing out on her forehead. This indicates to the reader how much she is being affected by Werner’s imminent departure. There is a feeling of great tension in the room. This is described by the uncle when he says “Ses paupières...semblaient l’être par un fil si tendu...qu’on n’eût pas osé passer un doigt entre leurs yeux” (p50). Further on, her eyes are described as being too open, too pale (p51).

Werner says goodbye to her, and the tension is further heightened by her hesitation. Eventually, she replies “Adieu” (p51).

This is extremely important in the novel. It shows the reader that Werner has managed to break the silence, and hence the resistance, of the niece to his attentions, indicating that the niece was indeed in love.
with Werner. The reader is left with the impression of a character torn between the love for her country and the love for a man who was the enemy of that country. Her character develops and changes in the course of the novel, and the reader is left with a feeling of sympathy for the girl who felt she was only behaving in the way that would have been expected of her, no matter how difficult that choice was for her.

Questions on characters

- Think of adjectives you could use to describe Werner von Ebrennac, and then look for evidence from the text to support your answer. For example, if you think Werner von Ebrennac is an idealist, what evidence can you find from the text to support your answer?

- Consider things like, does the uncle like Werner von Ebrennac? If so, how do you know? If not, what evidence can you find in the text to support your answer? Do you sympathise with how the uncle behaves towards Werner von Ebrennac? Why?

- How do you feel about the niece? Do you sympathise with her behaviour? What adjectives would you use to describe her character? What evidence can you find in the text to support your answer?
Themes

*Le Silence de la Mer* deals with various issues or themes. These themes are:

**A. War and Conflict**

There are various sorts of conflict addressed in *Le Silence de la Mer*:

1. The physical conflict between France and Germany
2. The inner conflict faced by each character:
   
a) Werner von Ebrennac
   In the novel Werner struggles to reconcile his beliefs and ideals with those of his compatriots, and in particular with the Nazi vision for France

b) The Uncle
   The uncle struggles to control his personal feelings towards Werner von Ebrennac as the enemy, and his patriotism towards his own country, and the resistance he must put up towards his enemy

c) The Niece
   The niece struggles to reconcile her true feelings for Werner von Ebrennac with the hatred she feels for the occupying force which he represents

**B. Love**

There are various aspects to this theme:

1. Patriotism (love for one’s country)
2. Love displayed between Werner von Ebrennac and the niece

**C. Hatred and Cruelty**

The theme of hatred and cruelty is displayed in:
1. The niece’s attitude towards Werner von Ebrennac in the initial stages of the text
2. The attitude of Werner von Ebrennac’s compatriots towards France
**Symbolism**

**Title**

The title of the novel is a bit enigmatic. *Le Silence* obviously represents the silent resistance the uncle and his niece maintain in Werner von Ebrennac’s presence.

The reference to the sea could be seen as a reference to the fact that all is not as it appears on the surface. All three characters appear to be calm and in control. However, beneath the surface there are all sorts of conflicting emotions which are hidden from view, in the same way as we are unaware of the hidden depths of the sea or the undercurrents beneath the surface of the water.

- What is the significance of the title of the novel?
- Is it an appropriate title? Why/why not?

**Other literary works**

Why does the Werner von Ebrennac quote from Macbeth and Beauty and the Beast?

How are these two passages related to events in the novel?

**Forest Walk**

Read the passage on pages 34-35:

“Il y a dans le château voisin de chez nous, une jeune fille...Elle est très belle et très douce...Mais aussi j’étais effrayé pour toujours à l’égard des jeunes filles allemandes.”

Why is this passage so important in the novel?
## Glossary

### Pages 17-18

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<th>English</th>
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<td>he was</td>
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<tr>
<td>précéder</td>
<td>to precede</td>
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<td>le déploiement</td>
<td>deployment</td>
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<tr>
<td>l’appareil militaire</td>
<td>military machine</td>
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<td>le troufion</td>
<td>trooper (slang)</td>
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<td>dégingandé</td>
<td>gangling</td>
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<td>carré</td>
<td>square</td>
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<td>aux mains</td>
<td>with hands</td>
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<td>le carrier</td>
<td>quarryman</td>
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<td>sans</td>
<td>without</td>
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<td>le mot</td>
<td>word</td>
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<td>however</td>
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<td>free</td>
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<td>paraître</td>
<td>to appear</td>
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<tr>
<td>le torpédo</td>
<td>touring car</td>
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<tr>
<td>pénétrer</td>
<td>to penetrate/enter into</td>
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<td>soldier</td>
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<td>smiling</td>
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<tr>
<td>extirper</td>
<td>to drag/pull out</td>
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<td>box/case</td>
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<td>bundle</td>
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<td>entouré de</td>
<td>surrounded by</td>
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<td>la toile</td>
<td>cloth, material</td>
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<tr>
<td>monter</td>
<td>to take upstairs</td>
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<td>le cavalier</td>
<td>rider</td>
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<td>apparaître</td>
<td>to appear</td>
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<td>mettre pied à terre</td>
<td>to set foot on the ground</td>
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<td>barn</td>
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<td>se servir de</td>
<td>to use</td>
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<td>workshop</td>
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<td>le trou</td>
<td>hole</td>
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<td>se passer</td>
<td>to happen</td>
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<td>de bonne heure</td>
<td>early</td>
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<td>ramener</td>
<td>to bring back</td>
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<td>themselves</td>
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<td>tin trunk</td>
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<td>déposer</td>
<td>to put down/dump</td>
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<td>neighbouring</td>
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<td>s’adresser à</td>
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<td>to knock</td>
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<td>au fond de</td>
<td>at the back of</td>
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<td>room</td>
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<td>in the shadow</td>
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<td>convenient</td>
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<td>to walk</td>
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<td>noise</td>
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<td>cup</td>
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<td>garder</td>
<td>to keep</td>
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<td>le mien/la mienne</td>
<td>mine</td>
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<td>il faisait nuit</td>
<td>it was dark</td>
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<td>la casquette</td>
<td>cap</td>
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<td>plat</td>
<td>flat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>un imperméable</td>
<td>raincoat</td>
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</table>
jeter  to throw
une épaule  shoulder
comme  like
rester  to stay/remain
rabattre  to fold back
se tenir  to stand
contre  against
le mur  wall
sans rien regarder  without looking at anything
à petits coups  in little sips
sembler  to seem
glisser  to slip/slide
l’avant-bras  forearm
militairement  in a military fashion
se découvrir  to take off his hat
se tourner vers  to turn to
discrètement  discretely
incliner  to bow
le buste  chest
légèrement  lightly/slightly
faire face  to face
adresser  to address
la révérence  bow
grave  serious
je me nomme  my name is
avoir le temps de  to have time to
vite  quickly
le nom  name
le descendant  descendant
un émigré  emigrant
ajouter  to add
désolé  sorry
trainer  to drag
adosser  to lean against
droit  straight
lentement  slowly
vide  empty
croiser  to cross
reprendre  to continue
éviter  to avoid
l’ordonnance  military orderly
la tranquillité  peace
debout
au milieu de
la solive
pencher
en avant
le cou
la naissance
la poitrine
voûté
la hanche
étroit
le visage
marqué
la joue
cacher
l’arcade
en arrière
briller
soyeusement
le lustre
se prolonger
de plus en plus
épais
le brouillard
alourdir
de plomb
désorienté
naître
le sourire
les lèvres
sans nulle trace
ébaucher un geste
échapper
raide
le profil
puissant
proéminent
entre
mi-joint
l’or
le feu
la cheminée

standing
in the middle of
rafter
to lean
forward
neck
(here) base
chest
stooped
hip
narrow
face
marked
cheek
to hide
arch
backwards
to shine
carefully (like silk, silkily)
lustre/light
to lengthen
more and more
thick
fog
to weigh down/increase
leaden
disorientated
to be born
smile
lips
with no trace
to start to make a movement
to escape
stiff
profile
powerful
prominent
between
half joined
gold
fire
hearth
éprouver  to feel
la patrie  homeland
brusquement  brusquely
un ange  angel
au-dessus de  above
le chemin  way
un escalier  staircase
gravir  to climb
la marche  step
suivre  to follow
le pas  footprint
résonner  to echo
le couloir  corridor
fort  strong
faible  weak
allumer  to light
hausser les épaules  to shrug one’s shoulders
attirer  to pull
le genou  knee
velours  velvet
coudre  to sew

Pages 22-26

le lendemain matin  the next morning
mener  to lead
entendre  to hear
par hasard  by chance
s’arrêter  to stop
le seuil  threshold
le/la vôtre  yours
le bois  wood
le charbon  coal
repeindre  to repaint
amener  to bring
le meuble  piece of furniture
le cuivre  copper
une assiette  plate
afin de  in order to
luire  to gleam
le bord  edge
doré  golden
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<tr>
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<th>English Translation</th>
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<tr>
<td>bas/basse</td>
<td>low</td>
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<td>widely</td>
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<td>mayor</td>
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<td>désigner</td>
<td>to point out</td>
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<td>le revers</td>
<td>back (of hand)</td>
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<td>building</td>
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<tr>
<td>apercevoir</td>
<td>to notice/make out</td>
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<td>hillside</td>
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<td>féliciter</td>
<td>to congratulate</td>
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<td>to make a mistake</td>
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<td>to salute</td>
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<td>through</td>
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<td>la vitre</td>
<td>window</td>
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<td>la veille</td>
<td>evening before</td>
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<td>himself</td>
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<tr>
<td>craindre</td>
<td>to fear</td>
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<td>déranger</td>
<td>to disturb</td>
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<td>fermer à clef</td>
<td>to lock</td>
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<td>traverser</td>
<td>to cross</td>
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<td>room</td>
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<td>la poignée</td>
<td>handle</td>
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<td>divers</td>
<td>various</td>
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<td>le coin</td>
<td>corner</td>
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<td>le fumoir</td>
<td>smoking room</td>
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<td>une inclinaison</td>
<td>tilt</td>
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<td>clair</td>
<td>clear</td>
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<td>un accord</td>
<td>agreement</td>
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<td>silent</td>
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<tr>
<td>le moindre</td>
<td>the least</td>
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<td>le fantôme</td>
<td>ghost</td>
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<td>il se peut que</td>
<td>it is possible</td>
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<td>le sentiment</td>
<td>feeling</td>
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<tr>
<td>se mêler</td>
<td>to mix up</td>
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<td>la volonté</td>
<td>wish/willpower</td>
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<td>sans</td>
<td>without</td>
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<tr>
<td>souffrir</td>
<td>to suffer</td>
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<td>un ennemi</td>
<td>enemy</td>
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<tr>
<td>plus de</td>
<td>more than</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>le mot</td>
<td>word</td>
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</table>
mème  same
étant  being
s’attarder  to linger
autour de  around
léger  slight
traduire  to convey
un examen  examination
immanquablement  inevitably
une approbation  approval
la chose  thing
brusquement  suddenly
au dehors  outside
la pluie  rain
glacial  icy
mouillant  wet
brûler  to burn
l’âtre  hearth
la bûche  log
conserver  to keep
malgré  in spite of
saupoudré  sprinkled
largement  widely/greatly
la venue  coming
s’agacer  to get annoyed
reconnaître  to recognise
la pensée  thought
tricoter  to knit
lentement  slowly
d’un air appliqué  in a careful manner
l’intérieur  inside
la démarche  walk/step
trempé  soaked
d’abord  first of all
la veste  jacket
bleu acier  steel blue
enchevetré  interwoven
la maille  stitch
large  wide
le négligé  neglect
plein de  full of
le chandail  sweater
de grosse laine  of coarse wool
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<thead>
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<th>English Translation</th>
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<td>écru</td>
<td>cream</td>
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<tr>
<td>mouler</td>
<td>to fit tightly</td>
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<td>se chauffer</td>
<td>to heat oneself up</td>
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<td>fire</td>
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<td>s’accroupir</td>
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<td>hard</td>
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<td>pine tree</td>
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<td>on top</td>
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<td>fine</td>
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<td>la voix</td>
<td>voice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sourd</td>
<td>dull</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>timbre</td>
<td>timbre (of voice)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l’ensemble</td>
<td>the whole thing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>le bourdonnement</td>
<td>buzzing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>plutôt</td>
<td>rather</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chantant</td>
<td>lilting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>appuyer</td>
<td>to lean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>le linteau</td>
<td>lintel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>le front</td>
<td>forehead</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>se courber</td>
<td>to bend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>se cogner</td>
<td>to hit oneself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>le sommet</td>
<td>top</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>demeurer</td>
<td>to stay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bouger</td>
<td>to move</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la vivacité</td>
<td>liveliness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la fois</td>
<td>time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>à demi allongé</td>
<td>half reclined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>douillette</td>
<td>soft (comfortable)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
la pesanteur
secouer
de nouveau
rompre
la guerre
compter
de loin
gravement
à cause de
la poche
le jambage
la console
de temps en temps
se frotter
l’occipital
le cerf
le fauteuil
jusqu’à
la défaite
la douleur
vaincu
encore
mené par
botté
casqué
promettre
sau
s’effondrer
la braise
rouler
hors de
se pencher
les pincettes
poursuivre
un exécutant
ainsi
une drôle de figure
un homme de guerre
se redresser
blessé
le coeur
lui
tousser  
tousser
peut-être
peut-être
l’obole
l’obole
hausser les sourcils
hausser les sourcils
indigné
indigné
presque
presque
rougir
rougir

Peages 27-30

le mode
en tenue
épargner
oublier
s’habiter à
le naturel
candide
le prétexte
dupe
commodément
s’éléver
doucement
au long de
le cœur
tenter de
obtenir
un acquiescement
le regard
la phrase
briser
s’enchaîner
la prière
la cariatide
s’interrrompre
s’approcher de
bien sûr
se ressembler
la lumière
celle-ci
éclairer
un habitant
le rayon

manner
manner
in uniform
in uniform
to spare
to forget
to get used to
naturalness
naive
excuse
taken in
suitably
to rise
softly
in the course of
heart
to try to
to get
approval/agreement
look
sentence
to break
to follow on from each other
prayer
pillar in the shape of a female figure
to interrupt oneself
to approach
of course
to look like
light
this one
to light
inhabitant
shelf
tant
pensivement
vouloir dire
la merveille
la bibliothèque
suivre
la reliure
un appel
hocher la tête
glisser
échapper
imperceptible
auquel
songer
aussitôt
tout de suite
surgir
se presser
la foule
d’abord
gravement
se faire la guerre
remuer
se battre
la paupière
plisser
la pommette
la fossette
poursuivre
heureux
la lâcheté
mépriser
détourner
s’attarder
divers
impitoyablement
insensible
digne
vaincre
têtu
les restes
sentir
so much
thoughtfully
to mean
marvel/wonder
library
to follow
binding (of book)
roll call
to nod one’s head
to slide
to escape
barely noticeable
about which
to think
immediately
straight away
to appear
to rush
crowd
first of all
seriously
to wage war
to move
to fight one another
eyelid
to crease
cheekbone
furrow
to continue
happy
cowardice
to scorn
to turn away
to linger
various
mercilessly
insensitive
dignified
to conquer
stubborn
remnants
to feel
rougir
le pli
peu à peu
s’inscrire
le sourcil
tirer
vivement
une aiguille
rompre
le fil
la grandeur
le conte
le titre
la Belle et la Bête
tenir à merci
impuissant
à toute heure du jour
implacable
pesant
fier/fière
dur(e)
valoir mieux
dégrossi
maladroit
rustre
auprès
aspirer
le geôlier
haï
la lueur
la patte
cesser de
haïr
la constance
le sortilège
maintenir
le pelage
dissiper
le chevalier
le baiser
parer de
rayonnant
to blush
fold/crease
gradually
to appear
eyebrow
to pull
sharply
needle
to break
thread
greatness
tale/story
title
Beauty and the Beast
to keep at one’s mercy
powerless
at all times of day
unmoveable
weighty
proud
hard
to be better
coarse
clumsy
brutish
next to
to strive/aspire
jailer
hated
light
paw
to cease
to hate
constancy
spell
to keep
skin/hide
to vanish
knight
kiss
to adorn with
radiant/beaming
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>French</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>le bonheur</td>
<td>happiness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>additionner</td>
<td>to add to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>le don</td>
<td>gift</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sans cesse</td>
<td>incessantly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pleurer</td>
<td>to cry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>surtout</td>
<td>above all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la peine</td>
<td>grief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ému</td>
<td>moved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>respirer</td>
<td>to breathe</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Pages 31-32**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>French</th>
<th>English</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>le chant</td>
<td>song</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la débâcle</td>
<td>collapse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>le cahier</td>
<td>notebook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>se résoudre à</td>
<td>to decide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>soulever</td>
<td>to raise/arouse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l’étonnement</td>
<td>astonishment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la nécessité</td>
<td>need</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>le fauteuil</td>
<td>armchair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>un ouvrage</td>
<td>work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>à la rencontre de</td>
<td>meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>le mien/la mienne</td>
<td>mine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>envoyer</td>
<td>to send</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>déchiffrer</td>
<td>to decipher/work out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la nuque</td>
<td>nape of neck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>se déplacer</td>
<td>to move</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la touche</td>
<td>piano key</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rejoindre</td>
<td>to come back to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hors de</td>
<td>beyond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la chair</td>
<td>flesh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>deviner</td>
<td>to guess</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pressentir</td>
<td>to sense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inconnaisable</td>
<td>unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>désinvesti</td>
<td>stripped</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>songeur</td>
<td>thoughtful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la pensée</td>
<td>thought</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>se mordiller</td>
<td>to chew</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>à la mesure de</td>
<td>(here) which is for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>combler</td>
<td>to overwhelm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>le chemin</td>
<td>way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>atteindre</td>
<td>to reach</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
la vérité
suivre
tout à fait
tourner le dos
appuyer
se retenir à
entre
à travers
le barreau
bourdonnant
avoir besoin de
accueillir
un étranger
le voyageur
le conquérant
conquérir
le sein
la soif
étancher
la pierre
pareil/pareille
le fils
surmonter

truth
to follow
completely
to turn one’s back
to lean
to hold on to
between
through
bar
buzzing
to need
to welcome
stranger
traveller
conqueror
to conquer
breast
thirst
to quench
stone
similar
son
to overcome

tout ce qui/que
au cours de
plus de
la soirée
ne…guère
varier
la rapsodie
la découverte
de loin
grandir
ma foi
se décourager
secouer
envahir
saturer
irrespirable
everything that
in the course of
more than
evening
hardly/scarcely
to change
enthusiastic speech
discovery
from afar
to grow
well
to become discouraged
to shake
to invade
to saturate
unbreathable
le sien/la sienne

dès

s’agiter

le signe

le moindre

sans heurt

le filtre

respirer

librement

de l’autre côté

jusqu’à ce que

vécu

là-bas

Vienne

Varsovie

ne...aucun(e)

autant

surtout

dilater

le souvenir

la noblesse

un ancêtre

la grandeur

la foi

la gentillesse

le destin

conduire

par-dessus

le blé

de lointain

jadis

partager

s’assombrir

entendre

blindé

tant de choses

ensemble

guérir

de nouveau

se réjouir de

épouser

presque

his

from

to become agitated

sign

the least

smoothly

filter

to breath

freely

on the other side

until

lived

there

Vienna

Warsaw

not a single

as much

above all

to dilate/grow bigger

memory

nobility

ancestor

greatness

faith

kindness

destiny

to lead

over/above

wheat

from a distance

in days gone by

to share

to darken

to hear

armoured

so many things

together

to cure

again

to be delighted about

to marry

almost
fiancé(e)  engaged
la promenade  walk
enfiler  to thread
le fil  thread
venir de  to have just
casser  to break
le chas  eye (of needle)
parvenir  to manage
un écureuil  squirrel
filer  to thread
la jonquille  daffodil
la jacinthe  hyacinth
sauvage  wild
s’exclamer  to cry out/exclaim
le présent  gift
s’allonger  to lie down
la mousse  moss
la fougère  fern
au-dessus  above
la cime  top/summit
se balancer  to sway/swing
voler  to fly
piquer  to sting
le menton  chin
sale  dirty
la bête  beast
vilain  horrid
le moustique  mosquito
faire un geste de la main  to gesture
vif/vive  quick
attraper  to catch
puni  to punish
arracher  to pull off
le prétendant  suitor
le remords  remorse
effrayé  afraid
à l’égard de  with regard to
malgré  in spite of
le/la camarade  friend
tant pis  too bad
en repos  at peace
remonter  to rise again
le maître
se diriger vers
retenu
tenir
l’épaule
frêle
la torsade
l’acajou
ajouter
quotidien

master
to go towards
restrained
to hold
shoulder
frail
coil
mahogany
to add
daily

printanier
le rayon
la bure
le lin
le col
tenir
fermé
l’index
s’éclairer
contenu
escompter
autrui
la puissance
filer
la noirceur
décrire
un écroulement
la pesanteur
coller
reprocher
ceux qui/que
obéir
la crainte
désormais
pendre
le géant
voler
relever la tête
se demander

spring
ray
sackcloth
linen
collar
to hold
shut
index finger
to light up
suppressed
to expect
others
power
to run
blackness
to describe
collapse
weight/heaviness
to stick
to criticise
those who
obey
fear
from now on
to hang
giant
to steal
to look up again
to wonder
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>French Word</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>plaindre</td>
<td>to pity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>malgré</td>
<td>in spite of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>le mépris</td>
<td>scorn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>souhaiter</td>
<td>to wish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sinon</td>
<td>if not</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>morne</td>
<td>dull</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or</td>
<td>now</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vendre</td>
<td>to sell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la patrie</td>
<td>country</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>une entremetteuse</td>
<td>go-between</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>claquer</td>
<td>to slap/slam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>enfoncer</td>
<td>to thrust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la paume</td>
<td>palm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prévenir</td>
<td>to warn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la permission</td>
<td>leave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mener</td>
<td>to lead</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>merveilleux</td>
<td>marvellous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>le témoin</td>
<td>witness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la blessure</td>
<td>wound</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cicatriser</td>
<td>to heal up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>profiter de</td>
<td>to take advantage of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>autant que</td>
<td>as much as</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rendre</td>
<td>to give back</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Pages 40-51**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>French Word</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>éteindre</td>
<td>to switch off</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la lumière</td>
<td>light</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>là</td>
<td>there</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>un hôte</td>
<td>guest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>se révéler</td>
<td>to be revealed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lorsque</td>
<td>when</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nombreux</td>
<td>numerous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>avouer</td>
<td>to confess</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>en repos</td>
<td>at rest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jusqu’à quel point</td>
<td>to what extent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>éprouver</td>
<td>to feel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l’inquiétude</td>
<td>anxiety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>là-haut</td>
<td>upstairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>résonner</td>
<td>to resound</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inégal</td>
<td>unequal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>têtu</td>
<td>stubborn</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
le front  forehead
chasser  to chase away
embrasser  to kiss
la tristesse  sadness
la colère  anger
l'idiotie  stupidity/idiocy
enraciné  deep-rooted
à peine  scarcely
vider  to empty
naître  to arise
le battement  beating
se rappeler  to remember
durement  hard
entêté  stubborn
noyer  to drown
à l'entour  round about
baigner  to bathe
moite  sweaty/sticky
le carré  square
la soie  silk
imprimé  printed
se désigner  to point out
la mollesse  softness
le fourneau  bowl (of pipe)
gémir  to groan
la marche  step/stair
croissant  growing/increasing
la volonté  will
subir  to be affected by
une épreuve  test
exténuant  exhausting
le grand-duc  kind of owl
s'envoler  to fly away
s'alourdir  to grow heavy
se confier  to confide in
le dossier  back
la lassitude  weariness
dépasser  to exceed
retarder  to put off/postpone
l'avenir  future
la légèreté  lightness
la brusquerie  brusqueness
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>French Word</th>
<th>English Equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>la timidité</td>
<td>shyness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vaincu</td>
<td>conquered/overcome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>plein</td>
<td>full</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>le coup</td>
<td>knock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s’attendre à</td>
<td>to look forward to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>envahi</td>
<td>invaded/overcome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>incoercible</td>
<td>uncontrollable / irrepressible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l’incertitude</td>
<td>uncertainty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s’écouler</td>
<td>to pass (of time)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>salutaire</td>
<td>healthy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la ténacité</td>
<td>persistence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pêcher</td>
<td>to fish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>le bouton</td>
<td>handle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>frapper</td>
<td>to strike</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>douloureux</td>
<td>painful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dévoilé</td>
<td>unveiled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bénin</td>
<td>minor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la tergiversation</td>
<td>change of mind</td>
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<tr>
<td>perdre</td>
<td>to lose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la force</td>
<td>strength</td>
</tr>
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<td>faible</td>
<td>weak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bas/basse</td>
<td>low</td>
</tr>
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<td>davantage</td>
<td>more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ajouter</td>
<td>to add</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ignorer</td>
<td>to be unaware</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>peu importe</td>
<td>it doesn’t matter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>subsister</td>
<td>to remain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>endosser</td>
<td>to put on/don</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dans l’embrasure de la porte</td>
<td>in the doorway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>raide</td>
<td>stiff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>surprenant</td>
<td>surprising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>écarté</td>
<td>apart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>saisi</td>
<td>seized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>demeurer</td>
<td>to stay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>démentir</td>
<td>to deny</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>refléter</td>
<td>to reflect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mieux</td>
<td>better</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>échapper</td>
<td>to escape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>se tendre</td>
<td>to tense up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>se livrer</td>
<td>to give oneself up to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>compassé</td>
<td>formal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>revivre</td>
<td>to come back to life</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
guetter to watch
le faucon falcon
luisant glistening
fripé wrinkled
un être being
l’insomnie insomnia
s’immobiliser to stop
crispé tense
le goulot neck (of bottle)
débouché uncorked
la parole word
baisser to lower
enrouler to wrap
la laine wool
la pelote ball (of wool)
se défaire to unroll
le tapis carpet
s’accorder à to agree to
épargner to spare
la honte shame
le prix price
respirer to breathe
la poitrine chest
gonfler to swell
le creux hollow
échoué stranded
le sable sand
supporter to stand/bear
cacher to hide
le poignet wrist
amer bitter
la gravité seriousness
hocher la tête to nod one’s head
berner to deceive/make a fool of
sottement stupidly
la frontière border
la figure face
le mépris scorn
à l’égard de regarding
le ton tone
la véhémence strong feeling
le rêve dream
faire la guerre  to wage war
le fou  fool
le niais  simpleton
avoir l’occasion de  to have the opportunity to
détruire  to destroy
surtout  especially
se tromper  to deceive oneself
le ménagement  care
rampant  crawling
la chienne  bitch
essoufflé  out of breath
serrer  to tighten
la machoire  jaw
tel/telle  such
saillir  to stand out
tortueux  twisted
le ver  worm
battre  to beat
temple
la peau  skin
trembling
le frémissement  underground
souterrain  gust of wind
un coup de brise  bubble
la bulle  film
durcir  to harden
bouillir  to boil
s’accrocher à  to cling to
oppressé  weighed down
accablé  overwhelmed
l’espoir  hope
la constatation  observation
inopinément  unexpectedly
un coup de clarion  sound of a bugle
bourrelé  tortured
le grelin d’amarre  mooring rope
purger  to purge/cleanse
flatter  to flatter
en même temps  at the same time
le barrage  dam
dioptrique  refraction of light
la cémentation  case-hardening
se cognier | to hit
le coin | corner
égaré | lost
le refuge | shelter
s’aligner | to line up
la menace | threat
balayer | to sweep
la pénombre | half dark
tout à fait | completely
creux | hollow
vibrer | to vibrate
inattendu | unexpected
saisissant | gripping
ultime | last
trainer | to drag
certes | of course
l’antan | the past
la mêlée | mixture
la bête | beast
grouiller | to swarm
se nier | to deny
lutter | to fight
briser | to break
malheureux | unhappy
de compagnie | together
sensible | sensitive
quitter | to leave
la supplication | plea
mélanger | to mix
tantôt...tantôt | sometimes
le venin | venom
l’estomac | stomach
la peur | fear
le ventre | stomach
le commerce | trade
mesurer | to measure/weigh up
intimider | to intimidate
la lucidité | lucidity/consciousness
la trempe | mettle/temper
sceller | to seal
le tombeau | tomb
à jamais | forever
suffire to be enough
renaitre to be reborn
la cendre ash
bâtir to build
détruire to destroy
le meurtre murder
le diable devil
acharné relentless
souffrir to suffer
trahi betrayed
bouger to move
le plomb lead
la cire wax
le plâtre plaster
délabré dilapidated
la tache spot/stain
le salpêtre saltpetre (salty substance used in gunpowder)
projeter to throw up
en dessous below
agiter to move
farouche shy
lancer to throw
une exhortation urge
franchir to cross
le manège motion
écraser to crush
le droit right
le devoir duty
la certitude certainty
le carrefour crossroads
les ténèbres darkness
fétide stinking
lugubre gloomy
l’ange angel
au-dessus de above
céleste heavenly
se détendre to relax
la raideur stiffness
le sol ground
faire valoir to assert
accorder to grant
se mettre en route  
préciser  
l’enfer  
le blé  
nourrir  
le cadavre  
se faire peine  
lunaire  
le bord  
opaline  
disjoint  
la moue  
la chevelure  
jaillir  
la perle  
la sueur  
la pupille  
le courant  
la barque  
un anneau  
la rive  
oser  
le chambranle  
dénué  
s’assouplir  
de sorte que  
s’évanouir  
le lendemain  
matinal  
la brume  
to set off  
to make clear  
hell  
wheat  
to nourish  
corpse  
to pain  
lunar  
edge  
iridescent  
disjointed  
pout  
hair  
to push out  
bead  
sweat  
pupil (of eye)  
current  
small boat  
ring  
bank  
to dare  
door frame  
devoid  
to relax  
so that  
to vanish  
the next day  
morning  
mist
**Résumé of Le Silence de la Mer**

*Le Silence de la Mer* raconte l’histoire d’un officier allemand, Werner von Ebrennac, qui est hébergé chez un vieux monsieur français et sa nièce pendant la deuxième guerre mondiale.

Amoureux de la France et de sa culture, Werner leur rend visite chaque soir et leur parle, non seulement de sa passion pour le pays, mais aussi de la littérature française, de la musique, et surtout de son espoir qu’un jour il y aura un rapprochement entre la France et l’Allemagne.

Par ses monologues, Werner tente de rompre le silence de ses hôtes, mais sans succès. L’oncle et sa nièce refusent de lui parler et lui opposent un silence déterminé parce que c’est le seul moyen par lequel ils peuvent exprimer leur patriotisme pour la France.

Cependant, au cours du récit, on est conscient d’une passion naissante entre Werner et la nièce bien qu’elle reste silencieuse et obstinée. Au cours d’une permission à Paris, Werner apprend que la collaboration entre les Allemands et les Français n’est qu’un prétexte pour détruire la culture française qui est dangereuse pour l’affirmation du nazisme en Europe.

Pendant son séjour à Paris, il découvre que ses amis d’avant-guerre ne partagent pas ses rêves et ses espoirs pour une grande Europe, et il rentre très déçu en province.

Une fois rentré, il décide de quitter le pays pour partir se battre sur les fronts de l’Est. Après avoir donné les raisons de sa décision à ses hôtes, la nièce lui parle pour la première et la dernière fois, en lui disant adieu.
Questions on Le Silence de la Mer

You have to sit an oral exam in February/March as part of your Advanced Higher course. You will be required to talk about the book you have read during this exam. The questions below will help you prepare for this.

1. Décris ce qui se passe dans Le Silence de la Mer?
   Le Silence de la Mer raconte l’histoire d’un officier allemand qui est hébergé chez un vieil monsieur et sa nièce pendant la deuxième guerre mondiale. (Voir le résumé à la page 42)

2. Qu’est-ce que tu penses de la nièce? C’est un personnage sympathique?
   Au début du roman, je ne la trouvais pas sympathique, mais j’ai vite compris qu’elle refusait de parler à Werner pour montrer sa résistance aux Allemands qui occupaient la France, et ce n’était pas parce qu’elle n’aimait pas Werner von Ebrennac. Au contraire, elle était amoureuse de lui, mais elle ne pouvait pas montrer ses émotions, et pour elle, c’était vraiment difficile.

3. Comment est-ce que tu trouves l’oncle?
   L’oncle est très sympathique et digne. Il aime bien Werner von Ebrennac, mais comme sa nièce il ne peut pas montrer ses émotions.

4. Pourquoi est-ce que l’oncle et la nièce refusent de parler à Werner von Ebrennac?
   Ils ne parlent pas à Werner von Ebrennac pour montrer leur résistance à l’occupation de la France par les Allemands. C’est le seul moyen qu’ils ont pour le faire.

5. A ton avis, est-ce que l’oncle aime Werner von Ebrennac?
   L’oncle aime beaucoup Werner von Ebrennac, à mon avis. Il le décrit au cours du roman d’une manière positive. Il dit même qu’il l’admire parce qu’il reste toujours fidèle à ses croyances et qu’il est toujours sincère.
6. Tu penses que la nièce est amoureuse de Werner von Ebrennac? 
La nièce est vraiment amoureuse de Werner von Ebrennac. On le voit dans ses réactions, et bien qu’elle ne lui adresse pas la parole jusqu’à la fin du livre, elle l’écoute toujours quand il parle.

7. Est-ce que Werner von Ebrennac est un Allemand typique? 
Pourquoi/pourquoi pas? 
Werner von Ebrennac n’est pas un Allemand typique, parce qu’il ne partage pas les sentiments des autres Allemands. Il n’a pas les mêmes idées pour la France que les autres. Il est idéaliste.

8. Pourquoi est-il déçu quand il rentre de Paris? 
Il est déçu parce qu’il s’est rendu compte que les autres Allemands ne partagent pas ses idées pour une union entre l’Allemagne et la France.

9. Pourquoi est-ce que Werner von Ebrennac décide de rejoindre une division à l’avant? 
Il décide de rejoindre une division à l’avant parce qu’il ne peut pas supporter ce que font ses collègues, et il sait bien qu’en allant, il va mourir. Pour lui, c’est le seul moyen de rester fidèle à ses idéaux.

10. Quels sont les thèmes principaux du livre, à ton avis? 
Il y a plusieurs thèmes dans le livre, comme celui du conflit, de l’amour, et du devoir.

11. Qu’est-ce que tu penses de la fin du livre? 
J’ai trouvé la fin du livre assez triste, mais inévitable. Werner von Ebrennac ne pouvait pas rester en France. Mais, en même temps, il ne pouvait pas partager les idées des Nazis parrapport à la France, alors pour lui, la seule chose qu’il pouvait faire était de rejoindre une division à l’avant.

12. Pourquoi est-ce que la nièce parle à Werner von Ebrennac à la fin du livre? 
Elle veut lui dire adieu. Mais c’est très important parce qu’en rompant son silence, elle montre ses vraies émotions pour lui,
et Werner von Ebrennac a finalement réussi à vaincre sa résistance.

13. Que signifie le titre du récit?
Le titre du récit reflète le conflit des caractères. Bien que tout apparaissa calme à la surface de la mer, il y a beaucoup de choses qui se passent sous la surface. Cela reflète les émotions des personnages dans le livre.

**Folio Essay titles**

1. Discuss the theme of conflict in Vercors’ Le Silence de la Mer.
2. In Vercors’s Le Silence de la Mer, Werner von Ebrennac does not share the views of his compatriots. To what extent does this make his final decision to return to military action inevitable?
3. Le Silence de la Mer is first and foremost a love story. To what extent do you agree with this statement?
Suggested Resources

Silence de la mer (2004)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dYKELeheAJA&index=6&list=PLC9AEF77E71C34833

Critique of the film

http://www.dvdclassik.com/critique/le-silence-de-la-mer-melville

Other resources

Silence de la mer textbook/literary crtiticism/DVD www.amazon.fr


French resistance

School history department

www.amazon.co.uk

www.amazon.fr