



**ENGLISH A1 – HIGHER LEVEL – PAPER 1**  
**ANGLAIS A1 – NIVEAU SUPÉRIEUR – ÉPREUVE 1**  
**INGLÉS A1 – NIVEL SUPERIOR – PRUEBA 1**

Friday 9 November 2007 (afternoon)  
Vendredi 9 novembre 2007 (après-midi)  
Viernes 9 de noviembre de 2007 (tarde)

2 hours / 2 heures / 2 horas

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INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

- Do not open this examination paper until instructed to do so.
- Write a commentary on one passage only.

INSTRUCTIONS DESTINÉES AUX CANDIDATS

- N'ouvrez pas cette épreuve avant d'y être autorisé(e).
- Rédigez un commentaire sur un seul des passages.

INSTRUCCIONES PARA LOS ALUMNOS

- No abra esta prueba hasta que se lo autoricen.
- Escriba un comentario sobre un solo fragmento.

Write a commentary on **one** of the following:

1. (a)

When Sophia arrived in the bedroom, she was startled because her father's head and beard were not in their accustomed place on the pillow. She could only make out something vaguely unusual sloping off the side of the bed. A few seconds passed – not to be measured in time – and she saw that the upper part of his body had slipped down, and his head was hanging, inverted,  
 5 near the floor between the bed and the ottoman. His face, neck, and hands were dark and congested; his mouth was open, and the tongue protruded between the black, swollen, mucous lips; his eyes were prominent and coldly staring. The fact was that Mr Baines had wakened up, and, being restless, had slid out partially from his bed and died of asphyxia. After having been unceasingly watched for fourteen years, he had, with an invalid's  
 10 natural perverseness, taken advantage of Sophia's brief dereliction to expire. Say what you will, amid Sophia's horror, and her terrible grief and shame, she had visitings of the idea: he did it on purpose!

She ran out of the room, knowing by intuition that he was dead, and shrieked out, "Maggie," at the top of her voice; the house echoed.

15 "Yes, miss," said Maggie, quite close, coming out of Mr Povey's chamber with a slop-pail. "Fetch Mr Critchlow at once. Be quick. Just as you are. It's father —"

Maggie, perceiving darkly that disaster was in the air, and instantly filled with importance and a sort of black joy, dropped her pail in the exact middle of the passage, and almost fell down the crooked stairs. One of Maggie's deepest instincts, always held in check by the stern  
 20 dominance of Mrs Baines, was to leave pails prominent on the main routes of the house; and now, divining what was at hand, it flamed into insurrection.

No sleepless night had ever been so long to Sophia as the three minutes which elapsed before Mr Critchlow came. As she stood on the mat outside the bedroom door she tried to draw her mother and Constance and Mr Povey by magnetic force out of the wakes\* into the house, and her  
 25 muscles were contracted in this strange effort. She felt that it was impossible to continue living if the secret of the bedroom remained unknown one instant longer, so intense was her torture, and yet that the torture which could not be borne must be borne. Not a sound in the house! Not a sound from the shop! Only the distant murmur of the wakes!

"Why did I forget father?" she asked herself with awe. "I only meant to tell *him* that they  
 30 were all out, and run back. Why did I forget father?" She would never be able to persuade anybody that she had literally forgotten her father's existence for quite ten minutes; but it was true, though shocking.

Then there were noises downstairs.

"Bless us! Bless us!" came the unpleasant voice of Mr Critchlow as he bounded up the  
 35 stairs on his long legs; he strode over the pail. "What's amiss?" He was wearing his white apron, and he carried his spectacles in his bony hand.

"It's father – he's —" Sophia faltered.

She stood away so that he should enter the room first. He glanced at her keenly, and as it were resentfully, and went in. She followed timidly, remaining near the door while Mr Critchlow  
 40 inspected her handiwork. He put on his spectacles with strange deliberation, and then, bending his knees outwards, thus lowered his body so that he could examine John Baines point-blank. He remained staring like this, his hands on his strap apron-covered knees, for a little space; and then he seized the inert mass and restored it to the bed, and wiped those clotted lips with his apron.

45 Sophia heard a loud breathing behind her. It was Maggie. She heard a huge, snorting sob; Maggie was showing her emotion.

“Go fetch doctor!” Mr Critchlow rasped. “And don’t stand gaping there!”

“Run for the doctor, Maggie,” said Sophia.

“How came ye to let him fall?” Mr Critchlow demanded.

50 “I was out of the room. I just ran down into the shop —”

“Gallivanting with that young Scales!” said Mr Critchlow, with devilish ferocity. “Well, you’ve killed yer father; that’s all!”

55 He must have been at his shop door and seen the entry of the traveller! And it was precisely characteristic of Mr Critchlow to jump in the dark at a horrible conclusion, and to be right after all. For Sophia Mr Critchlow had always been the personification of malignity and malevolence, and now these qualities in him made him, to her, almost obscene. Her pride brought up tremendous reinforcements, and she approached the bed.

“Is he dead?” she asked in a quiet tone. (Somewhere within a voice was whispering, “So his name is Scales.”)

60 “Don’t I tell you he’s dead?”

Arnold Bennett, *The Old Wives’ Tale* (1908)

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\* wakes: town festival

1. (b)

**Three Lunulae, Truro<sup>1</sup> Museum**

Gold so thin,  
only an old woman  
would notice its weight

5 Crescent moons of gold  
from the sunken district  
of the dark,  
out of the archaeologist's earth

10 The women of the lunulae<sup>2</sup>  
threw no barbaric shadows  
yet a vivid dance  
lit up their bones

I sense the mood  
of many women  
who wore the new moon  
15 like a necklace

They have got over  
the winter  
while I still freeze

20 The slight quick tap  
of a clock  
goes on  
like the rhythm  
of an insect's leg  
in the grass

25 I linger  
in the locked room  
of the gold,

30 trying to see,  
beyond the sickle shapes,  
the faces of three women

Sharp shadows breathe hard,  
shedding skins like dusty snakes  
Light twists in a violent retching

For an instant  
35 there is the fragment of a lip,  
an eyebrow fine as a spider's threat

A face like a frost fern

The custodian  
locks the lunulae  
40 in the safe once more

Cornish,<sup>3</sup> they are,  
he says,  
dug up at St Juliot,  
regalia of this soil,  
45 and not for the British Museum

You buy me  
a postcard of the lunulae  
and we leave the museum,  
enter the thin gold remains  
50 of autumn

Penelope Shuttle, *A Leaf Out of His Book* (1999) Carcanet

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<sup>1</sup> Truro: town in Cornwall, England

<sup>2</sup> Lunulae: small crescent shaped ornaments, usually worn by women, possibly from the Bronze Age.  
These are likely being viewed at a museum in Cornwall, England.

<sup>3</sup> Cornish: of Cornwall

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