

ENGLISH A1 – STANDARD LEVEL – PAPER 1
ANGLAIS A1 – NIVEAU MOYEN – ÉPREUVE 1
INGLÉS A1 – NIVEL MEDIO – PRUEBA 1

Thursday 2 May 2002 (morning)

Jeudi 2 mai 2002 (matin)

Jueves 2 de mayo de 2002 (mañana)

1 hour 30 minutes / 1 heure 30 minutes / 1 hora 30 minutos

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

- Do not open this examination paper until instructed to do so.
- Write a commentary on one passage only. It is not compulsory for you to respond directly to the guiding questions provided. However, you may use them if you wish.

INSTRUCTIONS DESTINÉES AUX CANDIDATS

- Ne pas ouvrir cette épreuve avant d'y être autorisé.
- Rédiger un commentaire sur un seul des passages. Le commentaire ne doit pas nécessairement répondre aux questions d'orientation fournies. Vous pouvez toutefois les utiliser si vous le désirez.

INSTRUCCIONES PARA LOS ALUMNOS

- No abra esta prueba hasta que se lo autoricen.
- Escriba un comentario sobre un solo fragmento. No es obligatorio responder directamente a las preguntas que se ofrecen a modo de guía. Sin embargo, puede usarlas si lo desea.

Write a commentary on one passage only. It is not compulsory for you to respond directly to the guiding questions provided. However, you are encouraged to use them as starting points for your commentary.

1. (a)

Feet
September 1948

The plastic tablecloth hung so far down that I could only see their feet. But I could hear the noise and some of the talk, although I was so crunched up that I could make out very little of what they were saying. Besides, our collie dog, Smoky, was whimpering; every time he quivered under his fur, I became deaf to their words and alert to their noise.

5 Smoky had found me under the table when the room filled with feet, standing at all angles, and he sloped through them and came to huddle himself on me. He felt the dread too. Una. My younger sister, Una. She was going to die after they took her to the hospital. I could hear the clumping of the feet of the ambulance men as they tried to manoeuvre her on a stretcher down the stairs. They would have to lift it high over the
10 banister; the turn was too narrow. I had seen the red handles of the stretcher when the glossy shoes of the ambulance men appeared in the centre of the room. One had been holding it, folded up, perpendicular, with the handles on the ground beside his shiny black shoes, which had a tiny redness in one toecap when he put the stretcher handles on to the linoleum. The lino itself was so polished that there were answering rednesses
15 in it too, buried upside down under the surface. That morning, Una had been so hot that, pale and sweaty as she was, she had made me think of sunken fires like these. Her eyes shone with pain and pressure, inflated from the inside.

This was a new illness. I loved the names of the others – diphtheria, scarlet fever or scarlatina, rubella, polio, influenza; they made me think of Italian football players or
20 racing drivers or opera singers. Each had its own smell, especially diphtheria: the disinfected sheets that hung over the bedroom doors billowed out their acrid fragrances in the draughts that chilled your ankles on the stairs. The mumps, which came after the diphtheria, wasn't frightening; it couldn't be: the word was funny and everybody's face was swollen and looked as if it had been in a terrific fight. But this was a new sickness.
25 Meningitis. It was a word you had to bite on to say it. It had a fright and a hiss in it. When I said it I could feel Una's eyes widening all the time and getting lighter as if helium were pumping into them from her brain. They would burst, I thought, unless they could find a way of getting all that pure helium pain out.

They were at the bottom of the stairs. All the feet moved that way. I could see
30 my mother's brothers were there. I recognised Uncle Manus's brown shoes: the heels were worn down and he was moving back and forward a little. Uncle Dan and Uncle Tom had identical shoes, heavy and rimed with mud and cement, because they had come from the building site in Creggan. Dan's were dirtier, though, because Tom was the foreman. But they weren't good shoes. Dan put one knee up on a chair. There was
35 scaffold oil on his socks. He must have been dipping putlocks¹ in oil. Once he had invited me to reach right into the bucket to find a lock that had slipped to the bottom and when I drew it out, black to the upper muscle, the slick oil swarmed down my skin to corrugate on my wrist. I sprinkled handfuls of sawdust on it, turning my arm into a bright oatmeal sleeve that darkened before Dan made me wash it off.

40 But it was my mother’s and father’s feet that I watched most. She was wearing
low heels that needed mending, and her feet were always swollen so that even from
there I could see the shoe leather embedded, vanishing from that angle, into her ankles.
There was more scuffle and noise and her feet disappeared into the hallway, after the
45 stretcher, and she was cough-crying as my father’s workboots followed close behind
her, huge, with the laces thonged round the back. Then everybody went out, and the
room was empty.

Smoky shook under his fur and whimpered when I pushed him away. It was cold
with all the doors open and the autumn air darkening. Una was going to die. She was
only five, younger than me. I tried to imagine her not there. She would go to heaven,
50 for sure. Wouldn’t she miss us? What could you do in heaven, except smile? She had
a great smile.

from Seamus Deane, *Reading in the Dark* (1996)

¹ metal angle elements that can be tightened to secure scaffolding poles.

- What do we learn about the boy?
- What is the effect of using the boy himself as the narrator?
- How does the writer use “feet” to focus the reader’s attention on the family and its circumstances?
- What is the importance of work as a connecting thread in the passage?

1. (b)

After The Flood

The morning it was over, I walked
To the Jersey side, where there is a park,
And where even in summer the river
Is at least two feet higher than it is on our side,
5 Because of the way it bends. It had not been
A bad rise, such as many remember.
A line of flotsam, full of
Exotic-looking dark foliage stretched
Cross-wide through the park, just meeting
10 The river wall at the end corner. Things
I felt I must surely remember, they looked so
Familiar, had fished up there with sudden
Histories to them that would never get told.
I remembered how I had climbed the dike
15 Two days before, when the lower bridge
Was in danger. Coming in sight of the river then
The amazing thing was how much
More quiet the swollen water seemed
Than I had expected, how slowly
20 It seemed to move, like some beast sneaking.
Now it seemed noisy again, but I could hear
Other sounds coming over it. A sea-gull creaking,
Not tempted by the miserable leavings.
Almost disappointed myself, I made myself
25 Think of how much we had been spared,
How much that was cherished had, other times,
Been swept down the river. I noticed
Near the bottom of the park, just below
The high-water line, an old coat hanging
30 Snagged on a tree-branch, and caught myself wondering
What sort of drunken creature had passed there.

W.S. Merwin, from *Green With Beasts* (1956)

- What impressions of the observer do you gain from the poem and how are they created?
- How does the narrative of an observer’s walk unify the poem?
- Consider the representation and the role of the river in the unfolding of the poem.
- What thoughts and feelings are aroused in you by the last sentence (l. 27-31)?