



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

Thursday 3 May 2007 (afternoon)  
Jeudi 3 mai 2007 (après-midi)  
Jueves 3 de mayo de 2007 (tarde)

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

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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. 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**

- N'ouvrez pas cette épreuve avant d'y être autorisé(e).
- Rédigez 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)

**Reflections on a Gift  
of Watermelon Pickle  
Received from a Friend  
called Felicity**

During that summer  
When unicorns were still possible;  
When the purpose of knees  
Was to be skinned;  
5 When shiny horse chestnuts  
    (Hollowed out  
    Fitted with straws  
    Crammed with tobacco  
    Stolen from butts  
10 In family ashtrays)  
Were puffed in green lizard silence  
While straddling thick branches  
Far above and away  
From the softening effects  
15 Of civilisation;

During that summer—  
Which may never have been at all;  
But which has become more real  
Than the one that was—  
20 Watermelons ruled.

Thick pink imperial slices  
Melting frigidly on sun-parched tongues  
Dribbling from chins;  
Leaving the best part,  
25 The black bullet seeds,  
To be spit out in rapid fire  
Against the wall  
Against the wind  
Against each other;

30 And when the ammunition was spent,  
There was always another bite:  
It was a summer of limitless bites,  
Of hungers quickly felt  
And quickly forgotten  
35 With the next careless gorging.

The bites are fewer now.  
Each one is savored lingeringly,  
Swallowed reluctantly.

But in a jar put up by Felicity,  
40 The summer which maybe never was  
Has been captured and preserved.  
And when we unscrew the lid  
And slice off a piece  
And let it linger on our tongue:  
45 Unicorns become possible again.

“Reflections on a Gift of Watermelon Pickle from a Friend Called Felicity” by John Tobias.  
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- How does the title contribute to the meaning of the poem?
- What aspects of childhood does the writer portray?
- Comment on imagery and diction.
- Consider how structure reflects the changes of perspective in the poem.

## 1. (b)

The Venetians love their children, sometimes with a sickly intensity. Venetian fathers carry their babies with unashamed delight, and Venetian mothers show signs of instant cardiac crisis if little Giorgio ventures within six feet of the water. Venetian children are exquisitely, if sometimes rather ludicrously dressed: the minutest little baby girls have pocket handkerchiefs tied under their chins,  
 5 as head-scarves, and even the waxen Christ-children of the churches, lapped in tinsel tawdry, sometimes wear lace-embroidered drawers.

It is not altogether an easy city for children to live in. It has no dangerous traffic and few unspeakable rascals; but Venice is inescapably urban, and only lucky children with gardens, or with parents indulgent enough to take them to the distant park, have somewhere green to play.  
 10 Blithe but pathetic are the groups of urchins to be found entertaining themselves, in hot dry squares or dripping alleyways, with their inexplicable Venetian games – the most popular is governed by the accuracy with which a child can throw the old rubber heel of a shoe, but is so hedged about with subtleties and qualifications that for the life of me I have never been able to master the rules. The State schools of Venice are excellent and lavishly staffed, but they generally occupy tall, dark,  
 15 overheated buildings, heavily decorated with potted plants. There are no playing fields or yards, and even the mid-morning break (or so my own children lugubriously assure me) is celebrated indoors, with a biscuit or an orange at a blank brown desk.

And in the afternoons, when school is over – children under ten only go in the mornings – and their mothers take them for a breath of air along the quayside, dauntingly spotless are those  
 20 infants' clothes, unscuffed their polished shoes, neat their gloves and impeccable their hair, as they stroll sedately along the quay, beside the dancing lagoon. In the winter months there is a fair on the Riva degli Schiavoni, near St Mark's, with the usual assembly of roundabouts, bumper-cars, swings and candy-floss men, revolving colourfully against a background of ships' funnels and riggings. All the apparatus of gaiety is there, with a tang of the sea as well,  
 25 but I have never wandered through that fairground without being struck by the pathos of it all, so restrained do the children seem to be, so ardently delighted by every bump of the merry-go-round. Many Venetians seem to work their children very hard, loading them with home-work, foreign languages and mathematics, to sustain the family honour, or get them into universities, and keeping them up late at night. Little Venetians often seem old beyond their years,  
 30 and frighteningly well-informed. When the Doge's Palace was burnt in 1479, the only record left of Petrarch's inscriptions upon the walls was the notebook of Marin Sanudo, who had taken the trouble to copy them down when inspecting the palace at the age of eight. (He went on to write a history of the world in fifty-five volumes.)

Jan Morris, *Venice* (1960), with permission of A P Watt Ltd on behalf of Jan Morris

- What image of Venice does the reader gain from the passage and how is that image created?
- Comment on the structure of the passage.
- In what ways does the writer's use of detail and choice of vocabulary indicate her attitude to Venetian families?
- What do we learn of the writer from this passage?