

GCSE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Paper 2 Writers' viewpoints and perspectives

Insert

The two sources that follow are:

Source A: 20th Century literary non-fiction

Unreliable Memoirs by Clive James

An extract from an autobiography, published in 1980

Source B: 19th Century non-fiction

Sweets and their Manufacture

An extract from a magazine article, published in 1868

Please turn the page over to see the sources

Source A

This extract is from Clive James' autobiography, published in 1980. Here, he writes about going to the cinema as a child in Australia in the 1940s.

1 Every Saturday afternoon at the pictures there was a feature film, sixteen cartoons and an
episode each from four different serials. The programme just went on and on and on.
The Margaret Street children would join up with the Irene Street children and the combined
5 mass would add themselves to the Sunbeam Avenue children and they would join the
swarm of children from all the other areas, all moving north along Rocky Point Road
towards Rockdale, where the Odeon stood.

In summer, the concrete footpaths were hot. The tarmac footpaths were even hotter:
bubbles of tar formed, to be squashed flat by our leathery bare feet. Running around on
gravelled playgrounds throughout the spring, by summer we had feet that could tread on a
10 drawing pin and hardly feel it.

When you got to the cinema the first thing you did was stock up with lollies. Lollies was the
Australian word for what the English call sweets and the Americans call candy. Some of
the more privileged children had upwards of five shillings each to dispose of, but in fact two
shillings was enough to buy you as much as you could eat. Everyone, without exception,
15 bought at least one Hoadley's Violet Crumble Bar. It was a slab of dense, dry honeycomb
coated with chocolate. So frangible was the honeycomb that it would shatter when bitten,
scattering bright yellow shrapnel. It was like trying to eat a china vase. The honeycomb
would go soft only after a day's exposure to direct sunlight. The chocolate surrounding it,
however, would liquefy after only ten minutes in a dark cinema.

20 Fantails came in a weird, blue packet shaped like an isosceles triangle with one corner
missing. Each individual Fantail was wrapped in a piece of paper detailing a film star's
biography — hence the pun, fan tales. The Fantail itself was a chocolate-coated toffee so
glutinous that it could induce lockjaw in a donkey. People had to have their mouths
chipped open with a cold chisel. One packet of Fantails would last an average human
25 being forever. A group of six small boys could go through a packet during the course of a
single afternoon at the pictures, but it took hard work and involved a lot of strangled crying
in the dark. Any fillings you had in your second teeth would be removed instantly, while
28 children who still had any first teeth left didn't keep them long.

The star lolly, outstripping even the Violet Crumble Bar and the Fantail in popularity, was
30 undoubtedly the Jaffa. A packet of Jaffas was loaded like a cluster bomb with about fifty
globular lollies the size of ordinary marbles. The Jaffa had a dark chocolate core and a
brittle orange candy coat: in cross-section it looked rather like the planet Earth.

It presented two alternative ways of being eaten, each with its allure. You could fondle the
Jaffa on the tongue until your saliva ate its way through the casing, whereupon the taste of
35 chocolate would invade your mouth with a sublime, majestic inevitability. Or you could bite
straight through and submit the interior of your head to a stunning explosion of flavour.

Sucking and biting your way through forty or so Jaffas while Jungle Jim wrestled with the
crocodiles on screen, you nearly always had a few left over after the stomach could take
no more. The spare Jaffas made ideal ammunition. Flying through the dark, they would
40 bounce off a child's skull with the noise of bullets hitting a bell.

Everyone either ate steadily or raced up and down the aisles or to and from the toilet or all
three. The uproar was continuous, like Niagara Falls. Meanwhile the film was unreeling in
front of us.

Source B

This extract is from a magazine article published in 1868. The writer explains how sweets were made and decorated in Victorian England.

1 The last thing a child asks is how the sweet it snaps up with such eagerness is made. Yet the manufacture of these delicacies — or should I say necessities? — of the nursery is a thing worth witnessing. A marvellous change has come across public opinion respecting sugar and sweets of all kinds. They used to be denounced by tender mothers as “trash and messes” and, possibly because they were so denounced, they tasted all the sweeter to the little ones. Now we would not wish to make taboo that which delights young taste buds the most. In moderation, there is nothing more wholesome than sugar. It is nourishing and warming because of the large amount of carbon contained in it.

10 In the past, sweets were not a speciality in England; there were no large factories for their production. All the higher-class sweets came from France and Italy but the introduction of steam into the process has made England the world leader in manufacturing sweets. Now sweets are made on the largest scale and are much cheaper. The basic style of old is also gone. The eye must now be satisfied as well as the tongue, even in the cheapest items. Think of a halfpennyworth of sweets done up in a ruby-coloured gelatine packet.

15 It is true that some of the more showy sweets made in the past were colourful, but it was metallic colour containing the most virulent poison. The famous scientist Doctor Hassall’s analysis of this painted confectionery, published some years ago, exposed the villainous manner in which this vividly coloured confection was made attractive to children by poisonous paint. The brighter the hue, the more deadly the sweet. The brilliant green, for instance, with which the confectionery was adorned, contained copper toxins.

25 It is easy to understand the bad name sweets acquired when thus made up. No doubt many young children were absolutely killed by excessive eating of these artistically poisoned candies. Doctor Hassall has heroically delivered us from this source of danger to our precious children. Nothing but harmless vegetable colours are now used, which, if not so brilliant as metallic ones, are quite safe. Today, it is wrong to use metallic colour in confectionery. However, it is just possible that some of the old sweets may still be for sale, so I bid parents beware of any sweets with vivid greens and reds, for they are sure to be poisonous.

30 Young girls are largely employed in the sweet-making trade. They are quick and stick well to their work; but they have a sweet tooth and empty stomachs and so help themselves to the sweets pretty freely. As it is impossible to stop petty pilfering, the workers are given liberty to eat as much as they like, although the employers reduce the already pitiful pay to account for this. In the factory which I visited, the girls certainly did not look any the worse for their unlimited consumption of lollipops and their rosy faces gave a clear answer to the old charge against the harmful nature of sweets.

35 The sweets are made with the utmost speed by these little workwomen, sitting silently, hunched over their benches. In one part of the dimly lit factory, I came upon the little artists squinting as they coloured the small sugar articles under the strict scrutiny of their supervisor. It was all vegetable colour, of course, and quite harmless. There is no great artistic talent required in the colouring tasks that the girls undertake, and it is far too cheaply paid to be very carefully done. But, however poor they may be as works of art, the sweets are most wholesome. This, as we have said before, was far from being the case a few years ago, before Doctor Hassall turned detective officer for the good of our little ones.

END OF SOURCES

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