



**CAMBRIDGE**  
International Education

# Syllabus

## Cambridge O Level Literature in English 2010

Use this syllabus for exams in 2028, 2029 and 2030.

Exams are available in the June and November series.

This syllabus is **not** available in all administrative zones.

Please check the syllabus page at [www.cambridgeinternational.org/2010](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/2010) to see if this syllabus is available in your administrative zone.



### Version I

For the purposes of screen readers, any mention in this document of Cambridge IGCSE refers to Cambridge International General Certificate of Secondary Education.

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## Why choose Cambridge?

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We work with schools worldwide to build an education that shapes knowledge, understanding and skills. Together, we give learners the confidence they need to thrive and make a positive impact in a changing world.

As part of the University of Cambridge, we offer a globally trusted and flexible framework for education from age 3 to 19, informed by research, experience, and listening to educators.

With recognised qualifications, high-quality resources, comprehensive support and valuable insights, we help schools prepare every student for the opportunities and challenges ahead.

### Qualifications that are recognised and valued worldwide

From the world's top-ranked universities to local higher education institutions, Cambridge qualifications open doors to a world of opportunities.

### Setting a global standard

With over 160 years of experience in delivering fair, valid and reliable assessments to students worldwide, we offer a global, recognised performance standard for international education.

### Your path, your way

Schools can adapt our curriculum, high-quality teaching and learning resources and flexible assessments to their local context. Our aligned offer helps Cambridge schools support every learner to reach their potential and thrive.

### Learning with lasting impact

Cambridge learners build subject knowledge and conceptual understanding, and develop a broad range of skills, learning habits and attributes to help make them ready for the world.

### Improving learning outcomes through data-led insight and action

Our trusted baseline and diagnostic assessments, together with our insights and evaluation service, help schools turn data into knowledge and actionable insights, to inform teaching decisions and improve learner outcomes.

### Bringing together a community of experts

We bring together the collective knowledge of experts and our diverse community of educators worldwide, supporting them to learn from one another and share ideas and information.

### Tackling the climate crisis together

We believe that education is key to tackling the climate crisis. Together with Cambridge schools, we can empower young people with the skills and knowledge to take action on climate change, helping them be ready for the world.

### School feedback: 'We think the Cambridge curriculum is superb preparation for university.'

**Feedback from:** Christoph Guttentag, Dean of Undergraduate Admissions, Duke University, USA

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## **Important: Changes to this syllabus**

**For information about changes to this syllabus for 2028, 2029 and 2030, go to page 29.**



# 1 Why choose this syllabus?

## Key benefits

Cambridge O Level is typically for 14 to 16 year olds and is an internationally recognised qualification. It has been designed especially for an international market and is sensitive to the needs of different countries. Cambridge O Level is designed for learners whose first language may not be English, and this is acknowledged throughout the examination process.

Our programmes promote a thorough knowledge and understanding of a subject and help to develop the skills learners need for their next steps in education or employment.

**Cambridge O Level Literature in English** offers learners the opportunity to read, interpret, evaluate and respond to a range of literature in English. The range includes poetry, prose and drama from the works of Shakespeare to contemporary literature.

This course enables learners to deepen their understanding and appreciation of the ways in which writers use English to express meaning and achieve effects. Cambridge O Level Literature in English will encourage learners to read for pleasure as well as to explore wider and universal issues, thereby developing a better understanding of themselves and the world.

Our approach in Cambridge O Level Literature in English encourages learners to be:

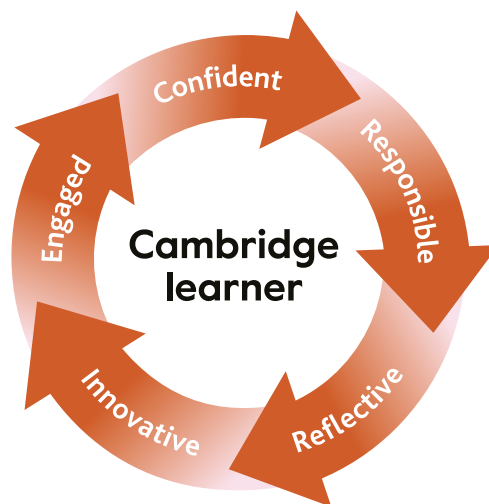
**confident**, exploring texts and ideas, and beginning to form personal insight

**responsible**, developing approaches to analysis to better understand ideas of culture, context and the community

**reflective**, considering literary ideas that are presented in a range of ever-changing contexts

**innovative**, thinking critically in the approach to tasks and texts

**engaged**, recognising the role literature plays in matters of personal, social and global significance.



**School feedback:** ‘Cambridge O Level has helped me develop thinking and analytical skills which will go a long way in helping me with advanced studies.’

**Feedback from:** Kamal Khan Virk, former student at Beaconhouse Garden Town Secondary School, Pakistan, who went on to study Actuarial Science at the London School of Economics

## Qualifications that are recognised and valued worldwide

Cambridge qualifications prepare and equip learners with the skills they need to thrive at university and beyond. The world's best higher education institutions recognise our qualifications and value the critical thinking skills, independent research abilities and deep subject knowledge that Cambridge learners bring.

We continually work with universities and colleges in every part of the world to ensure that they understand and accept our qualifications. Cambridge O Level provides a springboard to the Cambridge Advanced stage, as well as other post-16 routes. The combination of knowledge and skills in Cambridge O Level Literature in English gives learners a solid foundation for further study. Candidates who achieve grades A\* to C are well prepared to follow a wide range of courses including Cambridge International AS & A Level Literature in English.

Many universities require a combination of Cambridge International AS & A Levels and Cambridge O Levels or equivalent to meet their entry requirements.

Learn more at [www.cambridgeinternational.org/recognition](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/recognition)

## Supporting teachers

We believe education works best when teaching and learning are closely aligned to the curriculum, resources and assessment. Our high-quality teaching support helps to maximise teaching time and enables teachers to engage learners of all backgrounds and abilities.

We aim to provide the following support for each Cambridge qualification:

- Syllabus
- Specimen question papers and mark schemes
- Specimen paper answers
- Schemes of Work
- Example candidate responses
- Past papers and mark schemes
- Principal examiner reports for teachers.

These resources are available on the School Support Hub at [www.cambridgeinternational.org/support](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/support), our secure online site for Cambridge teachers. Your exams officer can provide you with a login.

Additional teaching and learning resources are also available for many syllabuses and vary according to the nature of the subject and the structure of the assessment of each syllabus. These can include ready-built lesson materials, digital resources and multimedia for the classroom and homework, guidance on assessment and much more. Beyond the resources available on the School Support Hub, a wide range of endorsed textbooks and associated teaching and learning support are available from Cambridge at [www.cambridge.org/education](http://www.cambridge.org/education) and from other publishers. Resources vary according to the nature of the subject and the structure of the assessment of each syllabus.

You can also contact our global Cambridge community or talk to a senior examiner on our discussion forums.

Sign up for email notifications about changes to syllabuses, including new and revised products and services, at [www.cambridgeinternational.org/syllabusupdates](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/syllabusupdates)

## Professional development

Find the next step on your professional development journey.

- **Introduction courses** – An introduction to Cambridge programmes and qualifications. For teachers who are new to Cambridge programmes or new to a specific syllabus.
- **Focus on Teaching courses** – These are for teachers who want to explore a specific area of teaching and learning within a syllabus or programme.
- **Focus on Assessment courses** – These are for teachers who want to understand the assessment of a syllabus in greater depth.
- **Marking workshops** – These workshops help you become more familiar with what examiners are looking for, and provide an opportunity to raise questions and share your experiences of the syllabus.
- **Enrichment Professional Development** – Transform your approach to teaching with our Enrichment workshops. Each workshop focuses on a specific area of teaching and learning practice.
- **Cambridge Professional Development Qualifications (PDQs)** – Practice-based programmes that transform professional learning for practising teachers. Available at Certificate and Diploma level.

For more information visit [www.cambridgeinternational.org/support-and-training-for-schools](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/support-and-training-for-schools)

### Supporting exams officers

We provide comprehensive support and guidance for all Cambridge exams officers.  
Find out more at: [www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide)



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## 2 Syllabus overview

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### Aims

The aims describe the purposes of a course based on this syllabus.

The aims are to:

- enjoy the experience of reading literature in English
- explore literary texts in different forms, from different periods, diverse cultures and societies
- communicate an informed personal response appropriately and effectively
- appreciate different ways in which writers create meanings and achieve effects
- develop the transferable critical reading and writing skills needed for future learning.

We are an education organisation and politically neutral. The contents of this syllabus, examination papers and associated materials do not endorse any political view. We endeavour to treat all aspects of the exam process neutrally.



## Content overview

Cambridge O Level Literature in English provides learners with the opportunity to gain knowledge and understanding of international literature, originally written in English. Candidates study poetry, prose and drama.

Throughout the O Level course, learners will learn to recognise and appreciate the ways writers use English to achieve a range of effects. They will do this through a combination of the study of complete novels, plays and poems in addition to literary extracts and unseen texts, developing their analytical skills and ability to interpret texts, alongside a personal response to the texts studied.



This O Level syllabus shares content with other Literature in English syllabuses. For further support see the School Support Hub for IGCSE Literature in English 0475. Textbooks endorsed to support IGCSE Literature in English are suitable for use with this syllabus.

## Assessment overview

All candidates take two components. Candidates will be eligible for grades A\* to E.

### All candidates take:

**Paper 1** 1 hour 30 minutes  
Poetry and Prose (Open text) 50%  
50 marks  
Candidates answer two questions: one from Section A and one from Section B.  
Section A Poetry: answer one question from a choice of two on each set text. The poems will be printed in the paper.  
Section B Prose: answer one question from a choice of two essay questions on each set text.  
Externally assessed

### and:

**Paper 2** 2 hours  
Drama and Unseen (Open text) 50%  
50 marks  
Candidates answer two questions: one from Section A and one from Section B.  
Section A Drama: answer one question from a choice of two on each set text – one passage-based and one essay question.  
Section B Unseen: answer one question from a choice of two, one based on a poem and one on a prose extract.  
Externally assessed

Information on availability is in the **Before you start** section.

## Assessment objectives

The assessment objectives (AOs) are:

### AO1

Show detailed knowledge of the content of literary texts in the three main forms (drama, poetry and prose), supported by reference to the text.

### AO2

Understand the meanings of literary texts and their contexts and explore texts beyond surface meanings to show deeper awareness of ideas and attitudes.

### AO3

Analyse ways in which writers use language, structure and form to create meanings and achieve effects.

### AO4

Communicate a sensitive and informed personal response to literary texts.

## Weighting for assessment objectives

The approximate weightings allocated to each of the assessment objectives (AOs) are summarised below.

### Assessment objectives as a percentage of the qualification

Assessment objective	Weighting in O Level %
AO1	25
AO2	25
AO3	25
AO4	25
Total	100

### Assessment objectives as a percentage of each component

Assessment objective	Weighting in components %	
	Paper 1	Paper 2
AO1	25	25
AO2	25	25
AO3	25	25
AO4	25	25
Total	100	100

### 3 Subject content

This syllabus gives you the flexibility to design a course that will interest, challenge and engage your learners. Where appropriate you are responsible for selecting texts, resources and examples to support your learners' study. These should be appropriate for the learners' age, cultural background and learning context as well as complying with your school policies and local legal requirements.

This course helps learners develop highly transferable skills through close reading of set texts, unseen texts and literary extracts. Learners are required to engage with how language is used to create meanings and effects. They learn skills of analysis and communication, developing writing techniques such as how to write a well-structured essay and how to use quotations and references to support their ideas. These skills are valuable for the study of literature as well as having broader benefits for study in other subject areas.

The set texts are updated regularly in the syllabus and may change from one year of examination to the next. Before you begin teaching, check the set text list for the year in which your candidates will take their examinations.

#### Set texts for examination in 2028 – Paper 1

Candidates study two set texts for Paper 1. The set texts for 2028 are listed here. For some texts we specify which edition to use. Where the edition is not specified, candidates may use any edition of the set text, provided it is not an abridgement or a simplified version.

##### Section A: Poetry

Candidates study **one** set text from Section A (Poetry). Candidates study all 15 poems from the chosen text.

From *Songs of Ourselves, Volume 1*, the following 15 poems:

William Shakespeare – *Sonnet 18*

Aphra Behn – *Song: Love Armed*

Katherine Philips – *A Married State*

William Blake – *The Chimney-Sweeper*

Alexander Pope – from *An Essay on Man*

Carol Rumens – *Carpet-weavers, Morocco*

Charles Mungoshi – *Before the Sun*

Liz Lochhead – *Storyteller*

Gillian Clarke – *Lament*

Boey Kim Cheng – *Report to Wordsworth*

Sujata Bhatt – *A Different History*

Judith Wright – *Hunting Snake*

Kevin Halligan – *The Cockroach*

Elizabeth Brewster – *Where I Come From*

Seamus Heaney – *Follower*

These may be found in *Songs of Ourselves, Volume 1: The University of Cambridge International Examinations Anthology of Poetry in English* (Cambridge University Press). Poems printed in the paper will be printed as in this text.

continued

## Set texts for examination in 2028 – Paper 1 continued

**Section A: Poetry** continued

From *Songs of Ourselves, Volume 3*, the following 15 poems:

John Clare – *Insects*  
 Ellis Ayitey Komey – *Oblivion*  
 Alice Oswald – *Fox*  
 Ruth Dallas – *Deep in the Hills*  
 Moniza Alvi – *My Aunts Don't Want to Move*  
 Jacob Polley – *Ruin*  
 William Wordsworth – from *The Prelude*  
 Helen Dunmore – *Bouncing Boy*  
 Yvonne Gray – *Lightness*  
 William Shakespeare – *Sonnet 106*  
 Lady Mary Chudleigh – *To the Ladies*  
 Romalyn Ante – *Ode to a Pot Noodle*  
 Elizabeth Barrett Browning – from *My Heart and I*  
 Les Murray – *The Widower in the Country*  
 Ifi Amadiume – *Mistress of My Own Being*

These may be found in *Songs of Ourselves, Volume 3: Cambridge International Education Anthology of Poetry in English* (Cambridge University Press & Assessment). Poems printed in the paper will be printed as in this text.

Kayo Chingonyi, the following 15 poems:

*The Colour of James Brown's Scream*  
*Fisherman's Song*  
*Broomhall*  
*Some Bright Elegance*  
*The N Word (I.)*  
*Curfew*  
*Waves*  
*Kumukanda*  
*A Proud Blemish*  
*Grief*  
*Andrews Corner*  
*Kung'anda*  
*'Round Midnight*  
*Baltic Mill*  
*This poem contains gull song*

You can find these poems in *Kumukanda* by Kayo Chingonyi (Chatto & Windus). Poems printed in the paper will be printed as in this text.

## Set texts for examination in 2028 – Paper 1 continued

### Section B: Prose

Candidates study **one** set text from Section B (Prose). Candidates study the whole text.

Lesley Nneka Arimah – *What It Means When a Man Falls from the Sky*

Jane Austen – *Pride and Prejudice*

Ayanna Lloyd Banwo – *When We Were Birds*

Kiran Desai – *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard*

Susan Hill – *I'm the King of the Castle*

Colm Tóibín – *Brooklyn*

From *Stories of Ourselves, Volume 3*, the following 10 stories:

Thomas Hardy – *Tony Kytes, the Arch-Deceiver*

Kate Chopin – *A Pair of Silk Stockings*

Herman Bosman – *Excursion*

Ray Bradbury – *The Flying Machine*

Sam Selvon – *The Cricket Match*

David Lodge – *The Man Who Wouldn't Get Up*

Anita Desai – *Sale*

Ila Mehta – *Smoke*

Patricia Grace – *Fishing*

Silmy Abdullah – *Reflection*

These may be found in *Stories of Ourselves, Volume 3: Cambridge International Education Anthology of Stories in English* (Cambridge University Press & Assessment). Passages from these stories in the paper will be printed as in this text.

## Set texts for examination in 2028 – Paper 2

Candidates study one set text for Paper 2.

### Section A: Drama

Candidates study **one** set text in Section A (Drama). Candidates study the whole text.

Pearl Cleage – *Blues for an Alabama Sky*

Chinonyerem Odimba – *Princess & The Hustler*

J B Priestley – *An Inspector Calls*

William Shakespeare – *The Tempest*

Oscar Wilde – *The Importance of Being Earnest*

## Set texts for examination in 2029 – Paper 1

Candidates study two set texts for Paper 1. The set texts are updated regularly in the syllabus and may change from one year of examination to the next. Before you begin teaching, check the set text list for the year in which your candidates will take their examinations.

The set texts for 2029 are listed here. For some texts we specify which edition to use. Where the edition is not specified, candidates may use any edition of the set text, provided it is not an abridgement or a simplified version.

### Section A: Poetry

Candidates study **one** set text from Section A (Poetry). Candidates study all 15 poems from the chosen text.

From *Songs of Ourselves, Volume 2*, Part 2 the following 15 poems:

Jack Underwood – *Taking Back*

Christopher Reid – ‘*Blessed by the Indifference ...*’ (from *The Flowers of Crete*)

Judith Wright – *Australia 1970*

Thomas Carew – *The Spring*

Thomas Hardy – *The Darkling Thrush*

Ruth Pitter – *Stormcock in Elder*

Stevie Smith – *Parrot*

Vivian Smith – *At the Parrot House, Taronga Park*

Alice Oswald – *Eel Tail*

Walt Whitman – from *Crossing Brooklyn Ferry*

Kofi Awoonor – *The Sea Eats the Land at Home*

Allen Curnow – *You will Know When You Get There*

Charlotte Smith – *Written Near a Port on a Dark Evening*

Imtiaz Dharker – *Blessing*

Robinson Jeffers – *The Stars Go Over the Lonely Ocean*

These may be found in *Songs of Ourselves, Volume 2: The University of Cambridge International Examinations Anthology of Poetry in English* (Cambridge University Press). Poems printed in the paper will be printed as in this text.

## Set texts for examination in 2029 – Paper 1 continued

**Section A: Poetry** continued

From *Songs of Ourselves, Volume 3*, the following 15 poems:

John Clare – *Insects*  
 Ellis Ayitey Komey – *Oblivion*  
 Alice Oswald – *Fox*  
 Ruth Dallas – *Deep in the Hills*  
 Moniza Alvi – *My Aunts Don't Want to Move*  
 Jacob Polley – *Ruin*  
 William Wordsworth – from *The Prelude*  
 Helen Dunmore – *Bouncing Boy*  
 Yvonne Gray – *Lightness*  
 William Shakespeare – *Sonnet 106*  
 Lady Mary Chudleigh – *To the Ladies*  
 Romalyn Ante – *Ode to a Pot Noodle*  
 Elizabeth Barrett Browning – from *My Heart and I*  
 Les Murray – *The Widower in the Country*  
 Ifi Amadiume – *Mistress of My Own Being*

These may be found in *Songs of Ourselves, Volume 3: Cambridge International Education Anthology of Poetry in English* (Cambridge University Press & Assessment). Poems printed in the paper will be printed as in this text.

Liz Lochhead, the following 15 poems:

*Revelation*  
*Grandfather's Room*  
*For My Grandmother Knitting*  
*Poem for My Sister*  
*Box Room*  
*Girl's Song*  
*Ships*  
*Old Notebooks*  
*The Teachers*  
*I Wouldn't Thank You for a Valentine*  
*The Man in the Comic Strip*  
*The Beekeeper*  
*The Bridegroom*  
*Lady of Shalott*  
*Poets Need Not*

You can find these poems in *A Handsel* by Liz Lochhead (Polygon). Poems printed in the paper will be printed as in this text.

## Set texts for examination in 2029 – Paper 1 continued

### Section B: Prose

Candidates study **one** set text from Section B (Prose). Candidates study the whole text.

Lesley Nneka Arimah – *What It Means When a Man Falls from the Sky*

Ayanna Lloyd Banwo – *When We Were Birds*

Emily Brontë – *Wuthering Heights*

Tsitsi Dangarembga – *Nervous Conditions*

Colm Tóibín – *Brooklyn*

Gail Tsukiyama – *A Hundred Flowers*

From *Stories of Ourselves, Volume 3*, the following 10 stories:

Thomas Hardy – *Tony Kytes, the Arch-Deceiver*

Kate Chopin – *A Pair of Silk Stockings*

Herman Bosman – *Excursion*

Ray Bradbury – *The Flying Machine*

Sam Selvon – *The Cricket Match*

David Lodge – *The Man Who Wouldn't Get Up*

Anita Desai – *Sale*

Ila Mehta – *Smoke*

Patricia Grace – *Fishing*

Silmy Abdullah – *Reflection*

These may be found in *Stories of Ourselves, Volume 3: Cambridge International Education Anthology of Stories in English* (Cambridge University Press & Assessment). Passages from these stories in the paper will be printed as in this text.

## Set texts for examination in 2029 – Paper 2

Candidates study one set text for Paper 2.

### Section A: Drama

Candidates study **one** set text from Section A (Drama). Candidates study the whole text.

Chinonyerem Odimba – *Princess & The Hustler*

J B Priestley – *An Inspector Calls*

William Shakespeare – *The Tempest*

Oscar Wilde – *The Importance of Being Earnest*

August Wilson – *Fences*

## Set texts for examination in 2030 – Paper 1

Candidates study two set texts for Paper 1. The set texts are updated regularly in the syllabus and may change from one year of examination to the next. Before you begin teaching, check the set text list for the year in which your candidates will take their examinations.

The set texts for 2030 are listed here. For some texts we specify which edition to use. Where the edition is not specified, candidates may use any edition of the set text, provided it is not an abridgement or a simplified version.

### Section A: Poetry

Candidates study **one** set text from Section A (Poetry). Candidates study all 15 poems from the chosen text.

From *Songs of Ourselves, Volume 2*, Part 2 the following 15 poems:

Jack Underwood – *Taking Back*

Christopher Reid – ‘*Blessed by the Indifference ...*’ (from *The Flowers of Crete*)

Judith Wright – *Australia 1970*

Thomas Carew – *The Spring*

Thomas Hardy – *The Darkling Thrush*

Ruth Pitter – *Stormcock in Elder*

Stevie Smith – *Parrot*

Vivian Smith – *At the Parrot House, Taronga Park*

Alice Oswald – *Eel Tail*

Walt Whitman – from *Crossing Brooklyn Ferry*

Kofi Awoonor – *The Sea Eats the Land at Home*

Allen Curnow – *You will Know When You Get There*

Charlotte Smith – *Written Near a Port on a Dark Evening*

Imtiaz Dharker – *Blessing*

Robinson Jeffers – *The Stars Go Over the Lonely Ocean*

These may be found in *Songs of Ourselves, Volume 2: The University of Cambridge International Examinations Anthology of Poetry in English* (Cambridge University Press). Poems printed in the paper will be printed as in this text.

continued

## Set texts for examination in 2030 – Paper 1 continued

**Section A: Poetry** continued

From *Songs of Ourselves, Volume 3*, the following 15 poems:

John Clare – *Insects*  
 Ellis Ayitey Komey – *Oblivion*  
 Alice Oswald – *Fox*  
 Ruth Dallas – *Deep in the Hills*  
 Moniza Alvi – *My Aunts Don't Want to Move*  
 Jacob Polley – *Ruin*  
 William Wordsworth – from *The Prelude*  
 Helen Dunmore – *Bouncing Boy*  
 Yvonne Gray – *Lightness*  
 William Shakespeare – *Sonnet 106*  
 Lady Mary Chudleigh – *To the Ladies*  
 Romalyn Ante – *Ode to a Pot Noodle*  
 Elizabeth Barrett Browning – from *My Heart and I*  
 Les Murray – *The Widower in the Country*  
 Ifi Amadiume – *Mistress of My Own Being*

These may be found in *Songs of Ourselves, Volume 3: Cambridge International Education Anthology of Poetry in English* (Cambridge University Press & Assessment). Poems printed in the paper will be printed as in this text.

Liz Lochhead, the following 15 poems:

*Revelation*  
*Grandfather's Room*  
*For My Grandmother Knitting*  
*Poem for My Sister*  
*Box Room*  
*Girl's Song*  
*Ships*  
*Old Notebooks*  
*The Teachers*  
*I Wouldn't Thank You for a Valentine*  
*The Man in the Comic Strip*  
*The Beekeeper*  
*The Bridegroom*  
*Lady of Shalott*  
*Poets Need Not*

You can find these poems in *A Handsel* by Liz Lochhead (Polygon). Poems printed in the paper will be printed as in this text.

## Set texts for examination in 2030 – Paper 1 continued

### Section B: Prose

Candidates study **one** set text from Section B (Prose). Candidates study the whole text.

Ayanna Lloyd Banwo – *When We Were Birds*

Emily Brontë – *Wuthering Heights*

Tsitsi Dangarembga – *Nervous Conditions*

Richard Powers – *Playground*

Colm Tóibín – *Brooklyn*

Gail Tsukiyama – *A Hundred Flowers*

From *Stories of Ourselves, Volume 3*, the following 10 stories:

Thomas Hardy – *Tony Kytes, the Arch-Deceiver*

Kate Chopin – *A Pair of Silk Stockings*

Herman Bosman – *Excursion*

Ray Bradbury – *The Flying Machine*

Sam Selvon – *The Cricket Match*

David Lodge – *The Man Who Wouldn't Get Up*

Anita Desai – *Sale*

Ila Mehta – *Smoke*

Patricia Grace – *Fishing*

Silmy Abdullah – *Reflection*

These may be found in *Stories of Ourselves, Volume 3: Cambridge International Education Anthology of Stories in English* (Cambridge University Press & Assessment). Passages from these stories in the paper will be printed as in this text.

## Set texts for examination in 2030 – Paper 2

Candidates study one set text for Paper 2.

### Section A: Drama

Candidates study **one** set text from Section A (Drama). Candidates study the whole text.

Nilo Cruz – *Anna in the Tropics*

J B Priestley – *An Inspector Calls*

William Shakespeare – *The Tempest*

Oscar Wilde – *The Importance of Being Earnest*

August Wilson – *Fences*

## Requirements: set texts in open text examinations

In open text examinations, candidates may take set texts into the exam room. Texts may have highlighting, underlining or brief handwritten notes, but sticky notes are not allowed and there should be no other separate pieces of paper in the set text. Check Section 4 Details of the assessment for further information.

## Resources: set text editions for classroom use

There are many editions of set texts available, with newer editions sometimes including notes (often displayed on facing pages), illustrations, activities and further resources which make these texts particularly useful and user-friendly for classroom use.

The edition of Shakespeare used for setting extract questions on examination papers is the Alexander Text of *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare*, ed. Peter Alexander (Collins, 1951; new edition 2006, introduced by Peter Ackroyd). However, this complete, standard one-volume edition is not recommended for classroom study of individual plays.

Although we do not specify editions of individual plays, here are some examples of reliable and useful series:

- Cambridge School Shakespeare series, edited by R Gibson, V Wienand and R Andrews, Cambridge University Press
- Penguin Classics Shakespeare, Penguin
- Oxford School Shakespeare, Oxford University Press
- Heinemann Shakespeare, Heinemann
- Longman School Shakespeare, Pearson-Longman, series editor John O'Connor (useful for candidates with an English as a second language background).

## 4 Details of the assessment

### Paper 1 – Poetry and Prose (Open text)

Written paper, 1 hour 30 minutes, 50 marks

This is a **compulsory** written paper. It is an externally-set assessment, marked by Cambridge International.

Candidates answer **two** questions: one from Section A (Poetry) and one from Section B (Prose). Each question is worth 25 marks.

Set texts for study in this component are listed in Section 3 of this syllabus. Check the set text list for the year in which your candidates will take their examinations.

All questions encourage an informed personal response and test all four assessment objectives holistically. 'Personal response' means expressing what the text means to the candidate in response to the task, and 'informed' means referring closely to the text in justifying these interpretations.

#### Section A: Poetry

Candidates answer **one** question from Section A. There is a choice of two questions on each text.

The poems named in questions are printed in the question paper. Candidates are advised to read the poems they have studied and read the questions carefully before they answer the question.

Candidates demonstrate the following:

- knowledge of the content of the poem – through reference to relevant detail of the printed poem (AO1)
- understanding of ideas conveyed in the poem (AO2)
- analysis of ways in which the poet creates meanings and achieves effects, through use of form, language and structure (AO3)
- an informed personal response to the question and poem (AO4).

#### Section B: Prose

Candidates answer **one** question from Section B. There are two essay questions on each text.

Questions require candidates to demonstrate knowledge of the whole text.

Candidates demonstrate the following:

- knowledge of the content of the text – through reference to relevant detail, including direct quotations, from across the text (AO1)
- understanding of characters, relationships, themes and settings (AO2)
- analysis of ways in which the writer creates meanings and achieves effects, through use of form, language and structure (AO3)
- an informed personal response to the question and whole text (AO4).

This component is an open text (also called open book) examination and therefore candidates may take a copy of the selected text into the exam. Sticky notes are not allowed and there should be no other separate pieces of paper in the set texts.

Candidates may use highlighting, underlining or brief handwritten notes to make it easier for them to navigate to the essential elements of the text. The intention of bringing in highlighted and/or underlined copies is that candidates can navigate to the evidence they need to write an effective response during the exam.

Many texts already contain printed notes and commentaries by editors which are well known to examiners: such work of others may be used by candidates, but it should be quoted and referenced appropriately. Candidates are reminded that not following this process and passing off such work as their own will be deemed plagiarism.

Set texts allowed with:	Set texts <u>not</u> allowed with:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>highlighting or underlining</li> <li>candidates' brief handwritten notes using words and phrases (<b>not</b> full sentences)</li> <li>published notes / editor's commentary.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>separate pieces of paper inserted</li> <li>sticky notes or similar bookmarks</li> <li>extended handwritten notes in the books.</li> </ul>

## Paper 2 – Drama and Unseen (Open text)

Written paper, 2 hours, 50 marks

This is a **compulsory** written paper. It is an externally-set assessment, marked by Cambridge International.

Candidates answer **two** questions: one from Section A (Drama) and one from Section B (Unseen). Each question is worth 25 marks.

Set texts for study in this component are listed in Section 3 of this syllabus. Check the set text list for the year in which your candidates will take their examinations.

All questions encourage an informed personal response and test all four assessment objectives holistically. 'Personal response' means expressing what the text means to the candidate in response to the task, and 'informed' means referring closely to the text in justifying these interpretations.

### Section A: Drama

Candidates answer **one** question from Section A. There is a choice of two questions on each set text. Relevant passages are printed on the question paper. Candidates are advised to read the passage and question carefully before they answer their chosen question.

Candidates demonstrate the following:

- knowledge of the content of the text – through reference to relevant detail, including direct quotations, from across the text (AO1)
- understanding of characters, relationships, situations and themes (AO2)
- analysis of ways in which the writer creates meanings and achieves effects, through use of form, language and structure (AO3)
- an informed personal response to the question and the play (AO4).

This component is an open text examination and therefore candidates may take a copy of the selected text into the exam. Sticky notes are not allowed and there should be no other separate pieces of paper in the set texts.

Candidates may use highlighting, underlining or brief handwritten notes to make it easier for them to navigate to the essential elements of the text. The intention of bringing in highlighted and/or underlined copies is that candidates can navigate to the evidence they need to write an effective response during the exam.

Many texts already contain printed notes and commentaries by editors which are well known to examiners: such work of others may be used by candidates, but it should be quoted and referenced appropriately. Candidates are reminded that not following this process and passing off such work as their own will be deemed plagiarism.

Set texts allowed with:	Set texts <u>not</u> allowed with:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>highlighting or underlining</li> <li>candidates' brief handwritten notes using words and phrases (<b>not</b> full sentences)</li> <li>published notes / editor's commentary.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>separate pieces of paper inserted</li> <li>sticky notes or similar bookmarks</li> <li>extended handwritten notes in the books.</li> </ul>

## Section B: Unseen

Candidates answer **one** question from Section B. There is a choice of two questions. The questions require candidates to write a critical commentary on an extract printed in the question paper and to demonstrate an appreciation of the text. Bullet points provide suggestions about aspects of each text to focus on.

One question is based on a passage of literary prose fiction, such as an extract from a novel or short story. The other question is based on a poem or extract from a poem.

Candidates should spend around 30 minutes reading the questions and texts and planning their answer to the question they choose before starting to write. They should spend around 45 minutes on answering their chosen question.

All questions test all four assessment objectives holistically. Candidates demonstrate the following:

- knowledge of the content of the text – through reference to relevant detail and use of quotations from the text (AO1)
- understanding of ideas, characters, situations and themes conveyed in the text (AO2)
- analysis of ways in which the writer creates meanings and achieves effects, through use of form, language and structure (AO3)
- an informed personal response to the question and the text (AO4).

## Command words

Command words and their meanings help candidates know what is expected from them in the exams. The table below includes command words used in the assessment for this syllabus. The use of the command word will relate to the subject context.

Command word	What it means
<b>Explore</b>	Write in detail about particular aspects

Phrases such as the following may also be seen in the assessment for this syllabus:

Explore how the writer ...; How does the writer ...?; In what ways does the writer ...?; How far does the writer ...?; To what extent does the writer ...?

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## 5 What else you need to know

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This section is an overview of other information you need to know about this syllabus. It will help to share the administrative information with your exams officer so they know when you will need their support. Find more information about our administrative processes at [www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide)

### Before you start

#### Previous study

We recommend that learners starting this course should have studied a broad curriculum such as the Cambridge Lower Secondary programme or equivalent national educational framework.

#### Guided learning hours

We design Cambridge O Level syllabuses to require about 130 guided learning hours for each subject. This is for guidance only. The number of hours a learner needs to achieve the qualification may vary according to each school and the learners' previous experience of the subject.

#### Availability and timetables

All Cambridge schools are allocated to one of six administrative zones. Each zone has a specific timetable. Find your administrative zone at [www.cambridgeinternational.org/adminzone](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/adminzone). This syllabus is **not** available in all administrative zones.

Cambridge O Levels are available to centres in administrative zones 3, 4 and 5.

You can view the timetable for your administrative zone at [www.cambridgeinternational.org/timetables](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/timetables)

You can enter candidates in the June and November exam series.

Check you are using the syllabus for the year the candidate is taking the exam.

Private candidates can enter for this syllabus. For more information, please refer to the *Cambridge Guide to Making Entries*.

## Combining with other syllabuses

Candidates can take this syllabus alongside other Cambridge International syllabuses in a single exam series. The only exceptions are:

- Cambridge IGCSE Literature in English (0475)
- Cambridge IGCSE (9-1) Literature in English (0992)
- Cambridge World Literature (0408)
- syllabuses with the same title at the same level.

Cambridge O Level, Cambridge IGCSE and Cambridge IGCSE (9–1) syllabuses are at the same level.

## Making entries

Exams officers are responsible for submitting entries. We encourage them to work closely with you to make sure they enter the right number of candidates for the right combination of syllabus components. Entry option codes and instructions for submitting entries are in the *Cambridge Guide to Making Entries*. Your exams officer has access to this guide.

## Exam administration

To keep our exams secure, we produce question papers for different areas of the world, known as administrative zones. We allocate all Cambridge schools to an administrative zone determined by their location. Each zone has a specific timetable.

Some of our syllabuses offer candidates different assessment options. An entry option code is used to identify the components the candidate will take relevant to the administrative zone and the available assessment options.

## Support for exams officers

We know how important exams officers are to the successful running of exams. We provide them with the support they need to make entries on time. Your exams officer will find this support, and guidance for all other phases of the Cambridge Exams Cycle, at **[www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide)**

## Retakes

Candidates can retake the whole qualification as many times as they want to.

Learn more about retake entries, including definitions and information on entry deadlines, at **[www.cambridgeinternational.org/retakes](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/retakes)**

To confirm what entry options are available for this syllabus, refer to the *Cambridge Guide to Making Entries* for the relevant series. Regulations for carrying forward component marks can be found in the *Cambridge Handbook* for the relevant year of assessment at **[www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide)**

## Language

This syllabus and the related assessment materials are available in English only.

## Accessibility and equality

### Syllabus and assessment design

At Cambridge we recognise that our candidates have highly diverse socio-economic, cultural and linguistic backgrounds, and may also have a variety of protected characteristics. Protected characteristics include special educational needs and disability (SEND), religion and belief, and characteristics related to gender and identity.

We follow accessible design principles to make our syllabuses and assessment materials as accessible and inclusive as possible. We review language accessibility, visual resources, question layout and the contexts used in questions. Using this approach means that we give all candidates the fairest possible opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and understanding.

### Access arrangements

Our design principles aim to make sure our assessment materials are accessible for all candidates. To further minimise barriers faced by candidates with SEND, illness or injury, we offer a range of access arrangements and modified papers. This is the principal way in which we comply with our duty to make 'reasonable adjustments', as guided by the UK Equality Act 2010.

#### Important:

Requested access arrangements should be based on evidence of the candidate's barrier to taking an assessment and should also reflect their normal way of working. For Cambridge to approve an access arrangement, we need to agree that it constitutes a reasonable adjustment and does not affect the security or integrity of the assessment. This is explained in section 1.3 of the *Cambridge Handbook* [www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide)

### Applying for access arrangements

- Details of our standard access arrangements and modified question papers are available in section 1.3 of the *Cambridge Handbook* [www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide)
- Centres are expected to check the availability of access arrangements and modified question papers at the start of the course. Check the *Cambridge Handbook*, the assessment objectives listed in the syllabus document and, where applicable, any access arrangement restrictions listed in the syllabus document.
- Contact us at the start of the course to find out if we can approve an access arrangement that is not listed in the *Cambridge Handbook*.
- All applications should be made by the deadlines published in the *Cambridge Handbook*.

## After the exam

### Grading and reporting

Grades A\*, A, B, C, D or E indicate the standard a candidate achieved at Cambridge O Level.

A\* is the highest and E is the lowest. 'Ungraded' means that the candidate's performance did not meet the standard required for grade E. 'Ungraded' is reported on the statement of results but not on the certificate.

In specific circumstances your candidates may see one of the following letters on their statement of results:

- Q (PENDING)
- X (NO RESULT).

These letters do not appear on the certificate.

On the statement of results, Cambridge O Level is shown as GENERAL CERTIFICATE OF EDUCATION ORDINARY LEVEL.

On certificates, Cambridge O Level is shown as General Certificate of Education.

## How students and teachers can use the grades

Assessment at Cambridge O Level has two purposes:

- 1 to measure learning and achievement  
The assessment confirms achievement and performance in relation to the knowledge, understanding and skills specified in the syllabus.
- 2 to show likely future success  
The outcomes help predict which students are well prepared for or likely to be successful in a particular course or career.  
The outcomes help students choose the most suitable course or career.

## Changes to this syllabus for 2028, 2029 and 2030

The syllabus has been reviewed and revised for first examination in 2028.

**You must read the whole syllabus before planning your teaching programme.**

<b>Changes to syllabus content</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The number of prose set texts has changed: there are 7 prose set texts to choose from</li> <li>Change to number of Shakespeare plays: there are 5 drama text choices but only 1 of them is a Shakespeare play</li> </ul>
<b>Changes to assessment (including changes to specimen papers)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The syllabus aims have been updated</li> <li>The learner attributes have been updated</li> <li>The wording of AO3 has been updated</li> <li>Paper 1 Prose and Poetry (Open text)               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This paper is now an open text paper. Candidates may take their prose text into the exam</li> <li>Change to the prose questions: there are two essay questions on each prose set text and no passage-based questions</li> <li>No change to the question style for poetry</li> <li>The assessment criteria have been updated</li> </ul> </li> <li>Paper 2 Drama and Unseen (Open text)               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The name of Paper 2 has changed to Paper 2 Drama and Unseen (Open text)</li> <li>Duration has changed to 2 hours</li> <li>Number of marks and component weighting have not changed: 50 marks, 50%</li> <li>This paper is now an open text paper. Candidates may take their drama text into the exam</li> <li>Unseen questions have been introduced to Paper 2. Candidates answer one drama question and one unseen question</li> <li>The assessment criteria have been updated</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

In addition to reading the syllabus, you should refer to the updated specimen assessment materials. The specimen papers will help your students become familiar with exam requirements and command words in questions. The specimen mark schemes show how students should answer questions to meet the assessment objectives.

Any textbooks endorsed to support the syllabus for examination from 2028 are suitable for use with this syllabus.



Syllabuses and specimen materials represent the final authority on the content and structure of all of our assessments.

With a Customer Services team available 24 hours a day, 6 days a week, and dedicated regional teams supporting schools in 160 countries, we understand your local context and are here to guide you so you can provide your learners with everything they need to prepare for Cambridge O Level.



### Quality management

We are committed to providing exceptional quality. In line with this commitment, our quality management system for the provision of international education programmes and qualifications for students aged 5 to 19 is independently certified as meeting the internationally recognised standard, ISO 9001:2015. Learn more at [www.cambridgeinternational.org/about-us/our-standards/](https://www.cambridgeinternational.org/about-us/our-standards/)

We are committed to making our documents accessible in accordance with the WCAG 2.1 Standard. We are always looking to improve the accessibility of our documents. If you find any problems or you think we are not meeting accessibility requirements, contact us at **info@cambridgeinternational.org** with the subject heading: Digital accessibility. If you need this document in a different format, contact us and supply your name, email address and requirements and we will respond within 15 working days.

Cambridge International Education, The Triangle Building, Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge, CB2 8EA, United Kingdom  
t: +44 (0)1223 553554      email: info@cambridgeinternational.org      www.cambridgeinternational.org