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*Access your support website at: www.oxfordsecondary.com/9780198425007*
English Literature for Cambridge IGCSE® is supported by a website packed full of additional material specially written to support your learning. Everything in the book and on the website has been designed to help you develop your skills and achieve your very best.

### Extra units
Two extra units designed to stretch your skills and approach assessment with confidence. Unit 5 is an extension unit which tackles unseen texts and extended essay writing. Unit 6 has lots of revision advice to use as you prepare for the assessment.

### Reading unseen texts

11.1 Approaching the unseen paper

The aim of the unit is to help students understand the correct approach to tackling unseen texts in the exam. Although the prescribed texts are written specifically for the course, they are not a substitute for tackling texts you have never seen before. This unit will help you develop the skills you need to tackle unseen texts and succeed in your exam. You will also have the opportunity to revise texts you are already familiar with.

Extra units

- Two extra units designed to stretch your skills and approach assessment with confidence. Unit 5 is an extension unit which tackles unseen texts and extended essay writing. Unit 6 has lots of revision advice to use as you prepare for the assessment.

### Glossary
A comprehensive revision tool that unpacks the vocabulary and carefully explains tricky terms.

### Worksheets
A wide range of activities to cement your understanding and develop your close reading skills. Some relate to specific texts but many can be used to analyse any text you study.

### Exam-style questions
These questions, written in the style of exam questions, will help you develop all the skills you need.
Introduction

Congratulations. You have just begun a voyage of discovery as you begin your Cambridge Literature in English course. Up to now you have probably studied a single subject called ‘English’ or ‘literacy’ and you have developed your skills in reading (both for specific purposes and for pleasure), writing, speaking, and listening. Your Cambridge IGCSE or O Level studies will continue to develop all of those skills, but in order to prepare you for the challenges of further study, you are now likely to be studying for two subjects, ‘Language’ and ‘Literature’.

This handbook will help you to prepare for Cambridge Literature in English by developing your skills in the close reading of different kinds of fictional text and improving your critical writing. It cannot replace the preparation of the set texts that you will work on with your teacher, but it gives you examples of how to improve your response to literature and develop your skills to higher levels. You will be introduced to texts in the three genres of drama, prose, and poetry, and to ways of analysing them and writing about them. There will be plenty of activity-based learning, with suggestions of activities you can try, in pairs and in groups, in order to develop your understanding, and there will be a range of extension tasks, both in the book and on the website, for further study and revision work.

How to use this book

The first three units are introductory and build on what you already know about English, working on your reading and writing skills and developing your understanding of how literature texts work. Students and teachers can use different parts of this unit in the early stages of the course in order to develop appreciation of genre, structure, and form. There is also an introduction to texts in their historical and cultural contexts.

Unit 4 is central to the course. It explores ways of studying and interpreting set texts through more detailed analysis of the conventions of each genre. Examples are drawn from some of the Cambridge Literature in English set texts, from past or future syllabuses.

KEY TERMS

Cambridge Literature in English = this textbook prepares you for both Cambridge IGCSE and O Level Literature in English.

literature = writing across the genres of poetry, prose, and drama. Not all literature needs to be fiction. Literature texts are those in which language and the imagination play an especially important role.

close reading = analysis of the words and effects writers use and how they make an impact on their readers.
The website includes two additional units. Unit 5 is an extension unit. It further develops your ability through more challenging coursework tasks, revision activities, and a whole chapter on the unseen paper, using past questions to develop an understanding of genre, form, and style.

Unit 6 is a final revision unit with exam-style questions and suggestions about how to answer them, revision advice, and tips for developing exam technique.

**Activity-based learning**

This will follow the principles of *assessment for learning* by encouraging a range of self-directed activities for students, allowing you to explore the meaning of texts, and work creatively to develop personal responses to the language and ideas used by writers. Each unit includes activities under the following headings.

**LEARNING POINTS**

These set out the objectives for each unit, chapter or section. They provide a clear definition of what you will be learning and which skills you will be practising.

**Think ahead**

These are activities that explore the world of the text, involving research into culture and background, genre and convention, ideas and themes, and the relationship between a text and its context. They will encourage you to engage with the world of the text before looking in detail at the words.

**Check your understanding**

These questions aim to achieve basic understanding of how the text works. They can be used as written activities or opportunities for whole-class discussion.

**Pair and share**

These are opportunities to discuss your response to a text with a partner or as part of a group. They are intended to extend and develop your understanding. You may find that different views and opinions are also possible!

**KEY TERMS**

*assessment for learning* = a student-centred approach to learning through which students are made aware of how their skills are assessed from the beginning of the course, and are actively involved in the process of formative assessment.
Individual responsibility for your learning and the development of your ideas will be emphasized throughout: this book will not tell you the answers but it will help you to ask yourself the right questions.

**Viewpoints**
These are more extended activities in groups, which allow the development of personal response through drama, debate, and structured discussion. Working together to make meaning from texts, you should be able to develop your understanding of how characters and situations are presented by the writers.

**Extend your learning**
These activities go beyond the surface to explore ideas and attitudes through language, and encourage you to look back on your reading with deeper understanding of words, the writer’s choices, and their effect on the reader.

**Language links**
Through both reading and writing activities there will be opportunities to link your literature work with the skills you are developing in your English language course. There will also be opportunities to write creatively in response to what you have read.

**Looking back**
You will be encouraged to check what you have learned and to assess the ways in which you have developed your skills as a student of literature by reviewing what you have learned in the current unit and how it builds on skills you have learned earlier in the course.

**Practice questions**
These questions follow a format similar to those used by Cambridge Literature in English exams, with advice on how to improve your answers. Some questions are identified as past paper questions from the Cambridge IGCSE or O Level. All other questions have been written by the author. You will find some ‘student-style responses’, with helpful comments on their strengths and weaknesses.

Throughout this handbook you will find additional information, and suggestions in boxes on the right-hand side of the page, including advice about how to plan and time your answers and glossary terms.

Where this icon occurs, there will be an opportunity to extend activities by referring to the website for text extracts, more worksheets, and more exam-style questions. These will help you to practise your essay writing skills and demonstrate your understanding of the texts.
1.1 The Cambridge syllabus

Literature has been described as the best that has been thought and said. Above all the Cambridge syllabus has the aim of encouraging you to ‘enjoy the experience of reading literature’. Literature texts have often stood the test of time. They appeal to very different cultures. At university, the study of literature allows you to study a huge range of texts and explore different ways of reading them. At school, your teachers will introduce you to various texts, some chosen by them and others set for examination, in order to introduce the key skills for success in this subject. These are:

- close reading—analysing the effects that writers use in order to make an impact on their readers
- reading in depth—tackling substantial whole texts in order to look at meaning beyond the surface narrative
- writing critically—exploring and evaluating a range of ideas and opinions, and coming to conclusions of your own about them
- writing discursively—learning to argue, finding evidence to support your views, and making an informed personal response to a text.

While language study teaches you a range of practical skills, literature study is more theoretical. Assessment focuses on the way in which students communicate their own response to texts through their essays. Studying literature teaches you to be sensitive to different people and what interests them, to be alert to the ways in which writers express themselves, and to ensure that your own ideas are well supported by close observation of language and form. These are all transferable skills and will be useful to you in your future studies.

Literature assessment objectives

Now have a look at the assessment objectives (AOs) for the Literature in English course.

AO1 Show detailed knowledge of the content of literary texts in the three main forms (drama, poetry, and prose)

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 Recognize and appreciate ways in which writers use language, structure and form to create and shape meanings and effects

AO4 Communicate a sensitive and informed personal response to literary texts
Cambridge O Level Literature in English divides AO3 in two:

AO3 Recognize and appreciate ways in which writers use language

AO4 Recognize and appreciate ways in which writers achieve their effects (e.g. structure, plot, characterization, dramatic tension, rhythm, setting and mood)

This helpfully defines language, structure and form but does not affect the way your work is assessed, which is the same as Cambridge IGCSE. AO5 for O Level is the same as AO4 for IGCSE.

Clearly all these objectives ask you to take a responsible and responsive approach to the reading you are asked to do. You will need to read and think about the books! However, for your understanding to go beyond the surface and for your personal response to be truly sensitive to the text you will need further qualities. They are:

● confidence in tackling the writer’s use of language and ideas
● engagement in the close reading and interpretation of a text
● an innovative and individual approach—your own response should be both truly personal and relevant to the question.

It is the purpose of this book to encourage those further skills, so that your response becomes personal, developed, and critical.

Thinking about assessment

Your teachers will set you various tasks to test your knowledge and understanding of your literature texts. Throughout this book and on the website you will find practice essay questions, in the style of the Cambridge Literature in English exams but written by the author. You will also find some examples of past paper questions. Initially, you will be given plenty of help in structuring and answering practice questions through bullet points and essay plans. Chapters 5 and 6 and online chapters 10 and 12 give guidance on how to make your essays more sophisticated.

Throughout the textbook, you are encouraged to assess your own work and those of others, as well as working with your teachers to improve your grades. You will not be achieving high marks right away but you should see yourself improving throughout the course.

Structure of the course

Cambridge IGCSE Literature in English has two syllabus codes: 0475 and 0992. These syllabuses are identical. One is grade A*-G for international students, and the other is graded 9–1 for UK schools. We do not refer to grades or mark schemes in this textbook, but concentrate on key skills. You will see examples of stronger and weaker work.

---

**KEY TERMS**

*Beyond the surface* = going beyond the dictionary definition (denotation) of words to explore their deeper connection with the reader (connotations).

*Personal response* = your own individual reaction to the text.
There are three different routes through the IGCSE syllabuses as shown below:

**IGCSE Option A**
- Poetry and Prose (Paper 1)
- Drama – two texts (Paper 2) closed texts

**IGCSE Option B**
- Poetry and Prose (Paper 1)
- Drama – one text (Paper 3) open texts
- Unseen texts (Paper 4)

**IGCSE Option C**
- Poetry and Prose (Paper 1)
- Drama – one text (Paper 3) open texts

The syllabus for O Level is identical to Option A in IGCSE, but you can study either one or two plays, as shown below:

**O Level**
- Poetry and Prose (Paper 1)
- Drama – one or two texts (Paper 2)

The route you take will depend on your teachers’ choices. Paper 1 is the same for all of them. If you take O Level, you must do Option A, but you may study either one or two drama texts. The drama texts and questions are identical for Paper 2 and Paper 3.

Your teachers will decide which texts you study, especially for coursework. The unseen paper tests your response to poetry and prose texts which you have not read before. The other exams all have a choice of passage-based or discursive essay questions. However, all examinations require close and detailed study of the three genres or forms of Literature in English: poetry, prose and drama. Each genre requires different skills, and this textbook develops those skills, beginning with drama, and using passages from current and past set texts.

You and your teachers can decide in which order to study texts and genres. This book is designed progressively, aiming to develop your reading skills over two or three years through close appreciation of different forms of writing. On the website, you can extend your studies with chapters on writing long essays, reading and writing about unseen literature, and preparing for examination.

**Understanding genre**

Literature began with poetry. These were songs and stories recited by bards or storytellers around the fire in ancient days which then became written texts. They were composed in a form of verse to make them easier to remember: lines have set patterns of rhythm and sound.

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**KEY TERMS**

*coursework* = work completed during the course, assessed by your teacher, and moderated both within the school and by Cambridge. The process of moderation is to ensure that students given the same mark have achieved the same standard. Any of the longer essays you write could be submitted as coursework. See online chapter 10 for more advice on assembling a coursework folder.

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**Check your understanding**

Draw up three columns headed prose, poetry, and drama in your exercise book or on paper. Think about the texts you have already studied or know about. Which column do they belong in?

Note: Texts chosen for study in this syllabus must have been originally written in English. Cambridge offer another syllabus called ‘World Literature’ which includes texts in translation.
Lyrics (songs based around emotional experiences) and epics (longer narrative or story) were the first poems to become established as parts of world literature. Before long, actors supplemented the recitals of bards, whether by adopting the parts of characters (called personae or more literally ‘masks’, as most early drama involved the wearing of masks) or by forming part of a chorus. This was the beginning of drama. Early drama was often in verse too: it helped the actors to remember their parts through structures of rhythm, repetition, and sound effect. Actors wore different masks for the different forms of tragedy and comedy.

However, sometimes both drama and stories were told in prose, keeping more closely to the language, rhythms, and rules of everyday speech.

**How did English literature develop?**

It is worth knowing that English literature is not really very old: the language itself comes from a fusion of the languages of the Anglo-Saxons and the Norman French, both heavily influenced by the Viking Norse, and really only becomes recognizable as English from about 1200 CE. The form of the novel is even more recent (indeed the name means ‘new’), as prose only became the most common genre for writing a narrative from around 1700 CE. It was the process of colonization and trade during the following years which established English as such a dominant world language: readers of English took their literature all over the world, and the world contributed its stories to what we now call ‘English’. This course book will take an international approach to our appreciation of literature, appropriate to Cambridge Literature in English which is studied all over the globe.

The poet Ezra Pound said that ‘Literature is news that stays news’, in other words, it comes out of the society that produced it and always begins as something novel, but over time different readers agree that there is still plenty to learn and understand in these texts long after they have been written. Literature scholars talk about a canon of texts which have remained a part of current thought or culture, and which students might expect to study. However, the texts which make up that canon keep changing, and they probably tell us more about the society we live in than the society that originally produced those texts.

When Shakespeare, for example, wrote his plays (although not his poems) he was probably more concerned about filling the theatres of which he was a shareholder. He probably did not imagine he was writing texts which would become canonical. He seems to have been fairly careless about how his plays were written down. Others collected his plays and studied them after his death. Many modern writers have rather mixed feelings about finding their works on school syllabuses, especially while they are still alive and writing!
In this poem the poet tells us that his father is a farmer, seen here planting potatoes, and his grandfather used to cut ‘turfs’, squares of peat used for heating. Both are traditional activities in the countryside of Ireland. The poet, however, has returned from university and wants to live life as a writer (he later won the Nobel Prize for Literature).

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**‘Digging’ by Seamus Heaney (1966)**

Between my finger and my thumb
The squat pen rests; snug as a gun.

Under my window, a clean rasping sound
When the spade sinks into gravelly ground:
My father, digging. I look down

Till his straining rump among the flowerbeds
Bends low, comes up twenty years away
Stooping in rhythm through potato drills
Where he was digging.

Pair and share

With a partner create a mind map to explore what you understand by the study of ‘English’. How does it divide into studies in language and literature? How do we decide the skills we need to demonstrate and develop in each? What makes up a syllabus for each subject? How did English get a ‘literature’? Which books have you read which you would call ‘literature’?

1.2 How do modern writers see the craft of writing?

Digital communication is rapidly changing the way we think about writing and literature, and you might want to think about what ‘English literature’ will look like at the end of the twenty-first century.

However, for an example of the ways in which writers saw the craft of literature in the twentieth century, there are few better examples than the poem which follows by Seamus Heaney called ‘Digging’, which headed his first published volume of poetry in 1966.

Many readers find poetry quite difficult at first. Remember that poetry comes out of song, and needs to be read, or at least ‘heard’ aloud. Listen for the sounds and ‘music’ of the poem and reflect on what it makes you feel. A famous poet said that ‘poetry communicates before it is understood’. A second reading can push your understanding further: focus on the images, or pictures, the poet creates and how they tell a story.

‘Literature is news that stays news.’
Ezra Pound

Pair and share

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Till his straining rump among the flowerbeds
Bends low, comes up twenty years away
Stooping in rhythm through potato drills
Where he was digging.
The coarse boot nestled on the lug, the shaft
Against the inside knee was levered firmly.
He rooted out all tops, buried the bright edge deep
To scatter new potatoes that we picked
Loving their cool hardness in our hands.

By God, the old man could handle a spade.
Just like his old man.

My grandfather cut more turf in a day
Than any other man on Toner’s bog.
Once I carried him milk in a bottle
Corked sloppily with paper. He straightened up
To drink it, then fell to right away
Nicking and slicing neatly, heaving sods
Over his shoulder, going down and down
For the good turf. Digging.

The cold smell of potato mould, the squelch and slap
Of soggy peat, the curt cuts of an edge
Through living roots awaken in my head.
But I’ve no spade to follow men like them.

Between my finger and my thumb
the squat pen rests.
I’ll dig with it.

Check your understanding

1. The poet uses a lot of hard or harsh sounds. List as many words as you can find that sound harsh. Why do these sounds suit the masculine activity of digging?

2. The poem is made up of a series of images, beginning with the poet looking out of his window then working back through his memory, through family legends, and stories. The poem tells a story across three generations. Organize your notes chronologically to explain:
   a. what the poet sees now
   b. how his father worked 20 years before
   c. how his grandfather worked before that.

3. Clearly what the poet is going to do is very different, but he tells us that he will ‘dig’ with his pen. In what ways might writing poetry be similar to digging? Think about the regular rhythms of work, the hard effort, and finding or planting something precious. How does the poet justify his choice of work?

4. When the poet talks about ‘living roots’ he is perhaps describing the stories of his family, as well as digging through the soil. How has his writing helped to convey those roots to you?

5. The end of the poem is very similar to the start, but it is also different. Why do you think the image of a spade has replaced that of a gun? Write down the effect of that change on you. This will help you to evaluate or interpret the poem.

Pair and share

How can we turn the poem into a drama? Form a group of three: poet, father, and grandfather. The father and grandfather are worried about what the boy will do with his life after university. What are the questions they have? Why doesn’t he want to be a farmer or dig for peat turfs? Discuss the ways in which they might argue or interact.

When writing a script, remember that audiences need to be introduced to each character and their interests. (It helps to give them a name!) It is often easier to start a scene with just two characters and then introduce a third. Give characters some longer speeches in order to explain their points of view and show them telling stories or passing on memories.

Perform your scene to your classmates. Has writing and performing the poem as drama helped you to understand it better? Has it developed your own understanding of the characters, or has it made the poem less intimate and personal?
Extend your learning

Now try turning the poem into a novel. Will you tell the story in the first person or the third person? First try drafting the boy’s diary, showing us his ideas as he thinks them through.

This probably does not look very different from the poem. Do you still have a strong sense of the characters and the realism of the situation which you created in your play?

You need to capture the drama of the moment when the boy tells his family what he intends to do, and, like in the play, you may want to use dialogue. However, a novel needs description to capture the realism of the moment and it needs to get inside the minds of the central characters and communicate some of their thoughts. You can do this in the third person just as effectively as in the first person, so now use the third person to give the young writer’s thoughts: a novel does not need to sound like a diary.

Re-write your diary or journal entry as a novel, in the third person, but giving the thoughts as well as the spoken words of the characters.

What have you discovered about how prose communicates? How is it different from drama?

Language links

Heaney uses the extended metaphor of digging to pay homage to what his father and grandfather did and to explore what he will do in his adult life. He makes his poem out of a slideshow of images or pictures which are briefly but memorably described.

Do you have an idea of the activity that will define your future life? If you don’t, perhaps looking at what your ancestors did will help you to think about this, even if it is your intention to rebel against their model, just as Heaney does, and explore a different kind of life.

Use Heaney’s style of writing which does not need a set and regular pattern of rhyme or rhythm to write a poem of your own, based on a sequence of images. You might like to illustrate your poem with images. Think about the ways in which sound effects, the contrast of long and short lines, and different kinds of punctuation (pauses) can make your writing more memorable.

Compare your ideas with a friend. Concentrate on the lines which your partner agrees work best. Your poem does not need to be very long, provided it works.

1.3 Making meaning

We now live in a global culture. Not only do sons choose very different lives from their fathers, but English has become a world language, spoken by over a quarter of the world’s population. That means it is not always easy to understand one another. Reading literature is about the art of interpretation, making sense and meaning out of the language of others. This is a very useful skill, but it isn't always easy, and in our diverse world, people don’t always understand one another.

KEY TERMS

extended metaphor = a comparison sustained across several lines and used in different ways.

interpretation = making sense and meaning by putting into your own words. In literature, this means understanding which goes beyond surface meaning. Interpretation needs to go deeper than factual summary, and should be supported by evidence.
Look at this extract from a short story written by R.K. Narayan in 1970. ‘A Horse and Two Goats’ describes an encounter between a very old, very poor Indian man called Muni and a rich American. Muni only has two words of English, ‘yes’ and ‘no’, and so doesn’t realize that the American wants to buy the statue of a horse which he is sitting under. Indeed Muni thinks he may want to question him about a murder. Muni is speaking Tamil in reply to the American’s English.


Muni felt totally confused but decided the best thing would be to make an attempt to get away from this place. He tried to edge out, saying, ‘Must go home,’ and turned to go. The other seized his shoulder and said desperately, ‘Is there no one, absolutely no one here, to translate for me?’ He looked up and down the road, which was deserted in this hot afternoon; a sudden gust of wind churned up the dust and dead leaves on the roadside into a ghostly column and propelled it towards the mountain road. The stranger almost pinioned Muni’s back to the statue and asked, ‘Isn’t this statue yours? Why don’t you sell it to me?’

The old man now understood the reference to the horse, thought for a second, and said in his own language, ‘I was an urchin this high when I heard my grandfather explain this horse and warrior, and my grandfather himself was this high when he heard his grandfather, whose grandfather…’

The other man interrupted him with, ‘I don’t want to seem to have stopped here for nothing. I will offer you a good price for this,’ he said, indicating the horse. He had concluded without the least doubt that Muni owned this mud horse. Perhaps he guessed by the way he sat at its pedestal, like other souvenir-sellers in this country presiding over their wares.

Muni followed the man’s eyes and pointing fingers and dimly understood the subject matter and, feeling relieved that the theme of the mutilated body had been abandoned at least for the time being, said again, enthusiastically, ‘I was this high when my grandfather told me about this horse and the warrior, and my grandfather was this high when he himself…’ and he was getting into a deeper bog of reminiscence each time he tried to indicate the antiquity of the statue.

The Tamil that Muni spoke was stimulating even as pure sound, and the foreigner listened with fascination. ‘I wish I had my tape-recorder here,’ he said, assuming the pleasantest expression. ‘Your language sounds wonderful. I get a kick out of every word you utter, here’ – he indicated his ears – ‘but you don’t have to waste your breath in sales talk. I appreciate the article. You don’t have to explain its points.’

Check your understanding

1. List the words which suggest how frustrated the American is by his inability to understand Muni.
2. Which words tell you how isolated this place is?
3. What is the importance of the horse to Muni?
4. What sort of value does the American place on the horse?
5. What does the American like about Muni’s language?
6. What does he fail to understand?
Extend your understanding

Different generations and different cultures have different ideas of values and traditions. How do stories preserve traditions for future generations? Write a review of a play you have seen or a story you have read that has told you something about the values and culture of the past. Try to answer the following questions.

1. Who was the story about?
2. What were the values or ideas which it presented?
3. How did it make you think about them?
4. What was the impact of the story on you and what do you remember best about it?

You will now see that interpreting the language and meaning of a story is about understanding ideas and attitudes as well as words.

Looking back

Do you now feel that you have a better idea of what a literature course involves? Here are some questions and activities for you to discuss and write about.

1. Give your own definition of the subject you are studying and its different parts. Explain the kind of literature you most enjoy and why. Remember your teachers may have different ideas about what they want you to study!
2. What are the skills that teachers are looking to reward in this subject?
3. How do poetry, prose and drama differ in form and effect? Which is the most private form and which the most public? Which is the most concentrated and which did you find easiest to write?
4. How does interpretation relate to the meaning of a text? What is meant by going beyond the literal meaning?
5. Why is cultural understanding important alongside an appreciation of language if we are to appreciate literature?

You are now ready to progress to the second unit, where we will explore the skills of reading across these three genres in more detail.
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