



**Cambridge Assessment
International Education**

Syllabus

**Cambridge International
AS & A Level
Literature in English 9695**

Use this syllabus for exams in 2024, 2025 and 2026.

Exams are available in the June and November series.

Also available for examination in March 2024, 2025 and 2026 for India only.



Version 1

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

**Cambridge
Pathway** 

Why choose Cambridge International?

Cambridge International prepares school students for life, helping them develop an informed curiosity and a lasting passion for learning. We are part of the University of Cambridge.

Our Cambridge Pathway gives students a clear path for educational success from age 5 to 19. Schools can shape the curriculum around how they want students to learn – with a wide range of subjects and flexible ways to offer them. It helps students discover new abilities and a wider world, and gives them the skills they need for life, so they can achieve at school, university and work.

Our programmes and qualifications set the global standard for international education. They are created by subject experts, rooted in academic rigour and reflect the latest educational research. They provide a strong platform for students to progress from one stage to the next, and are well supported by teaching and learning resources.

We review all our syllabuses regularly, so they reflect the latest research evidence and professional teaching practice – and take account of the different national contexts in which they are taught.

We consult with teachers to help us design each syllabus around the needs of their learners. Consulting with leading universities has helped us make sure our syllabuses encourage students to master the key concepts in the subject and develop the skills necessary for success in higher education.

Our mission is to provide educational benefit through provision of international programmes and qualifications for school education and to be the world leader in this field. Together with schools, we develop Cambridge learners who are confident, responsible, reflective, innovative and engaged – equipped for success in the modern world.

Every year, nearly a million Cambridge students from 10 000 schools in 160 countries prepare for their future with the Cambridge Pathway.

School feedback: ‘We think the Cambridge curriculum is superb preparation for university.’

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

Quality management



Cambridge International is committed to providing exceptional quality. In line with this commitment, our quality management system for the provision of international qualifications and education programmes for students aged 5 to 19 is independently certified as meeting the internationally recognised standard, ISO 9001:2015. Learn more at www.cambridgeinternational.org/ISO9001

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Important: Changes to this syllabus

For information about changes to this syllabus for 2024, 2025 and 2026, go to page 60.

The latest syllabus is version 1, published September 2021. There are significant changes to set texts which affect teaching.

Any textbooks endorsed to support the syllabus for examination from 2021 are still suitable for use with this syllabus.

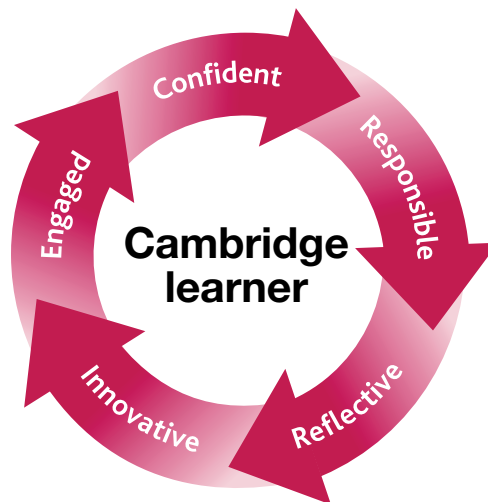
1 Why choose this syllabus?

Key benefits

The best motivation for a student is a real passion for the subject they're learning. By offering students a variety of Cambridge International AS & A Levels, you can give them the greatest chance of finding the path of education they most want to follow. With over 50 subjects to choose from, students can select the ones they love and that they're best at, which helps motivate them throughout their studies.

Following a Cambridge International AS & A Level programme helps students develop abilities which universities value highly, including:

- a deep understanding of their subjects
- higher order thinking skills – analysis, critical thinking, problem solving
- presenting ordered and coherent arguments
- independent learning and research.



Cambridge International AS & A Level Literature in English develops a set of transferable skills. These include critical analysis, constructing arguments and presenting knowledge and understanding in a balanced, articulate and fluent manner. Learners of Literature in English will be well-equipped for progression to higher education or directly into employment; finding that the skills needed will support them in a wide range of subjects and real-world situations.

Our approach in Cambridge International AS & A Level Literature in English encourages learners to be:

confident, exploring texts and ideas with self-assurance, intellectual freedom and personal insight

responsible, committing to their learning and developing approaches to critical analysis to better understand ideas of culture, context and the community

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

innovative, approaching tasks and texts with a combination of creative, original and flexible thinking

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

School feedback: 'Cambridge students develop a deep understanding of subjects and independent thinking skills.'

Feedback from: Principal, Rockledge High School, USA

Key concepts

Key concepts are essential ideas that help students develop a deep understanding of their subject and make links between different aspects. Key concepts may open up new ways of thinking about, understanding or interpreting the important things to be learned.

Good teaching and learning will incorporate and reinforce a subject's key concepts to help students gain:

- a greater depth as well as breadth of subject knowledge
- confidence, especially in applying knowledge and skills in new situations
- the vocabulary to discuss their subject conceptually and show how different aspects link together
- a level of mastery of their subject to help them enter higher education.

The key concepts identified below, carefully introduced and developed, will help to underpin the course you will teach. You may identify additional key concepts which will also enrich teaching and learning.

The key concepts for Cambridge International AS & A Level Literature in English are:

- **Language**
Exploring the variety and use of language in literary texts. Identifying literary techniques and explaining how their use contributes to a reader's analysis and understanding of the text.
- **Form**
Considering the ways in which writers use – or depart from – conventions of literary forms of prose, poetry and drama and how those inform meaning and effects.
- **Structure**
When analysed in reading: the organisation of a text or passage, its shape and development and how this contributes to the readers' understanding of its meaning and effects.
When used in writing: the construction of a relevant and supported argument appropriate to the question.
- **Genre**
Exploring the characteristics of different text types: for example, tragedy, comedy and satire.
- **Context**
Exploring the relationship between a text and its historical, social and cultural backgrounds and the ways in which this can illuminate the reading of a text. In response to unseen texts, considering the ways in which a text's meaning is shaped by conventions of form alongside those of language and style.
- **Style**
Analysing the ways in which choices regarding form, structure and language interact to create a distinctive style, for different forms and genres.
- **Interpretation**
At AS Level: Evaluating and explaining different ideas within a text.
At A Level: Evaluating and explaining different ideas within a text and using different critical readings to explore an understanding of texts and to help support literary arguments.

International recognition and acceptance

Our expertise in curriculum, teaching and learning, and assessment is the basis for the recognition of our programmes and qualifications around the world. Every year thousands of students with Cambridge International AS & A Levels gain places at leading universities worldwide. Our programmes and qualifications are valued by top universities around the world including those in the UK, US (including Ivy League universities), Europe, Australia, Canada and New Zealand.

UK NARIC, the national agency in the UK for the recognition and comparison of international qualifications and skills, has carried out an independent benchmarking study of Cambridge International AS & A Level and found it to be comparable to the standard of AS & A Level in the UK. This means students can be confident that their Cambridge International AS & A Level qualifications are accepted as equivalent, grade for grade, to UK AS & A Levels by leading universities worldwide.

Cambridge International AS Level Literature in English makes up the first half of the Cambridge International A Level course in Literature in English and provides a foundation for the study of Literature in English at Cambridge International A Level. Depending on local university entrance requirements, students may be able to use it to progress directly to university courses in literature or some other subjects. It is also suitable as part of a course of general education.

Cambridge International A Level Literature in English provides a foundation for the study of literature or related courses in higher education. Equally it is suitable as part of a course of general education.

For more information about the relationship between the Cambridge International AS Level and Cambridge International A Level see the 'Assessment overview' section of the Syllabus overview.

We recommend learners check the Cambridge recognition database and university websites to find the most up-to-date entry requirements for courses they wish to study.

Learn more at www.cambridgeinternational.org/recognition

School feedback: 'The depth of knowledge displayed by the best A Level students makes them prime targets for America's Ivy League universities.'

Feedback from: Yale University, USA

Supporting teachers

We provide a wide range of resources, detailed guidance and innovative training and professional development so that you can give your students the best possible preparation for Cambridge International AS & A Level. To find out which resources are available for each syllabus go to www.cambridgeinternational.org/support

The School Support Hub is our secure online site for Cambridge teachers where you can find the resources you need to deliver our programmes. You can also keep up to date with your subject and the global Cambridge community through our online discussion forums.

Find out more at www.cambridgeinternational.org/support

Support for Cambridge International AS & A Level			
<p>Planning and preparation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Next steps guides. • Schemes of work. • Specimen papers. • Syllabuses. • Teacher guides. 	<p>Teaching and assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Endorsed resources. • Online forums. • Support for coursework and speaking tests. 	<p>Learning and revision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Example candidate responses. • Past papers and mark schemes. • Specimen paper answers. 	<p>Results</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Candidate Results Service. • Principal examiner reports for teachers. • Results Analysis.

Sign up for email notifications about changes to syllabuses, including new and revised products and services at www.cambridgeinternational.org/syllabusupdates

Professional development

We support teachers through:

- Introductory Training – face-to-face or online
- Extension Training – face-to-face or online
- Enrichment Professional Development – face-to-face or online

Find out more at www.cambridgeinternational.org/events

- Cambridge Professional Development Qualifications

Find out more at www.cambridgeinternational.org/profdev



Supporting exams officers

We provide comprehensive support and guidance for all Cambridge exams officers.

Find out more at: www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide

2 Syllabus overview

Aims

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

The aims are to enable students to:

- enjoy the experience of reading literature
- develop an appreciation of and an informed personal response to literature in English in a range of texts in different forms, and from different periods and cultures
- communicate effectively, accurately and appropriately in written form
- develop the interdependent skills of reading, analysis and communication
- analyse and evaluate the methods writers use in creating meaning and effects
- encourage wider reading and an understanding of how it may contribute to personal development
- build a firm foundation for further study of literature.



Cambridge Assessment International Education is 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 International AS & A Level Literature in English will provide learners with the opportunity to gain further knowledge and understanding of international poetry, prose and drama, with candidates studying all genres at both levels.

A wide range of inspiring set texts have been carefully selected to offer a depth and breadth of literary study and to encourage lively and stimulating classroom discussion. At AS Level learners will study **three** set texts and prepare for **one** unseen text. At A Level they will study **four** further set texts.

Throughout the AS and A Level course learners will be encouraged to practise their skills in close reading through the study of literary extracts and unseen texts; developing skills of analysis and interpretation of texts, alongside their expression of personal response to the texts studied. Learners will explore the conventions of genres of texts and the contexts in which works have been written, read and received.

At A Level learners will further develop their subject knowledge through the evaluation of opinions and ideas, both their own and those of others.

These are highly transferable skills and can help learners in other subject areas, as well as equipping them for higher education and/or employment.

Support for Cambridge International AS & A Level Literature in English



Our School Support Hub www.cambridgeinternational.org/support provides Cambridge schools with a secure site for downloading specimen and past question papers, mark schemes, grade thresholds and other curriculum resources specific to this syllabus. The School Support Hub community offers teachers the opportunity to connect with each other and to ask questions related to the syllabus.

School feedback: ‘Cambridge International AS & A Levels prepare students well for university because they’ve learnt to go into a subject in considerable depth. There’s that ability to really understand the depth and richness and the detail of a subject. It’s a wonderful preparation for what they are going to face at university.’

Feedback from: US Higher Education Advisory Council

Assessment overview

Paper 1

Drama and Poetry 2 hours

50 marks

Candidates answer **two** questions: one question from Section A: Drama and one question from Section B: Poetry.

Externally assessed

50% of the AS Level

25% of the A Level

Paper 2

Prose and Unseen 2 hours

50 marks

Candidates answer **two** questions: one question from Section A: Prose and one question from Section B: Unseen.

Externally assessed

50% of the AS Level

25% of the A Level

Paper 3

Shakespeare and Drama 2 hours

50 marks

Candidates answer **two** questions: one question from Section A: Shakespeare and one question from Section B: Drama.

Externally assessed

25% of the A Level

Paper 4

Pre- and Post-1900 Poetry and Prose 2 hours

50 marks

Candidates answer **two** questions: one question from Section A: Pre-1900 Poetry and Prose, and one question from Section B: Post-1900 Poetry and Prose.

Candidates respond to both a poetry question and a prose question.

Externally assessed

25% of the A Level

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

There are three routes for Cambridge International AS & A Level [Subject]:

Route	Paper 1	Paper 2	Paper 3	Paper 4
1 AS Level only (Candidates take all AS components in the same exam series)	yes	yes	no	no
2 A Level (staged over two years) Year 1 AS Level*	yes	yes	no	no
Year 2 Complete the A Level	no	no	yes	yes
3 A Level (Candidates take all components in the same exam series)	yes	yes	yes	yes

* Candidates carry forward their AS Level result subject to the rules and time limits described in the *Cambridge Handbook*. See **Making entries** for more information on carry forward of results [and marks].

Candidates following an AS Level route are eligible for grades a–e. Candidates following an A Level route are eligible for grades A*–E.

Assessment objectives

The assessment objectives (AOs) are:

AO1 Knowledge and understanding

Respond with understanding to literary texts in a variety of forms, from different cultures; with an appreciation of relevant contexts that illuminate readings of the texts.

AO2 Analysis

Analyse ways in which writers' choices of language, form and structure shape meanings and effects.

AO3 Personal response

Produce informed independent opinions and interpretations of literary texts.

AO4 Communication

Communicate a relevant, structured and supported response appropriate to literary study.

AO5 Evaluation of opinion

Discuss and evaluate varying opinions and interpretations of 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 each qualification

Assessment objective	Weighting in AS Level %	Weighting in A Level %
AO1 Knowledge and understanding	25	20
AO2 Analysis	25	20
AO3 Personal response	25	20
AO4 Communication	25	20
AO5 Evaluation of opinion	0	20
Total	100	100

Assessment objectives as a percentage of each component

Assessment objective	Weighting in components %			
	Paper 1	Paper 2	Paper 3	Paper 4
AO1 Knowledge and understanding	25	25	20	20
AO2 Analysis	25	25	20	20
AO3 Personal response	25	25	20	20
AO4 Communication	25	25	20	20
AO5 Evaluation of opinion	0	0	20	20
Total	100	100	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.

At AS Level learners will study **three** set texts and prepare for **one** unseen text. At A Level they will study **four** further set texts. AS Level includes Paper 1 and Paper 2. A Level includes Paper 1, Paper 2, Paper 3 and Paper 4.

Set texts for examination in 2024

The set texts listed below are for examination in **2024**.

Set texts regularly rotate on 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.

Paper 1 Drama and Poetry

Learners study **two** set texts, **one** from Section A and **one** from Section B.

Candidates answer **two** questions, **one** from each section.

Section A Drama

Errol John	<i>Moon on a Rainbow Shawl</i>
William Shakespeare	<i>Measure for Measure</i>
John Webster	<i>The Duchess of Malfi</i>
Tennessee Williams	<i>Cat on a Hot Tin Roof</i>

Section B Poetry

Maya Angelou	<i>And Still I Rise</i>
Simon Armitage	<i>Sir Gawain and the Green Knight</i>
William Blake	Selected Poems from <i>Songs of Innocence and of Experience</i>
<i>Songs of Ourselves, Volume 2</i>	Selected Poems

Set texts for examination in 2024 continued

Paper 2 Prose and Unseen

Learners study **one** set text from Section A. For Section B, learners prepare to respond to an unseen text that may be poetry, prose or drama.

Candidates answer **two** questions, **one** from each section.

Section A Prose

Kiran Desai	<i>The Inheritance of Loss</i>
Ian McEwan	<i>Atonement</i>
<i>Stories of Ourselves, Volume 1</i>	Selected Stories (new selection from Volume 1 for 2024, 2025 and 2026)
Mark Twain	<i>The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</i>

Section B Unseen

Unseen text

Paper 3 Shakespeare and Drama

Learners study **two** set texts, **one** from Section A and **one** from Section B.

Candidates answer **two** questions, **one** from each section.

Section A Shakespeare

William Shakespeare	<i>Hamlet</i>
William Shakespeare	<i>The Merchant of Venice</i>

Section B Drama

Athol Fugard	<i>The Train Driver and Other Plays (The Train Driver, Coming Home, Have You Seen Us?)</i>
Eugene O'Neill	<i>Long Day's Journey Into Night</i>
Shelagh Stephenson	<i>An Experiment with an Air Pump</i>

Set texts for examination in 2024 continued

Paper 4 Pre- and Post-1900 Poetry and Prose

Learners study **two** set texts, **one** from Section A and **one** from Section B. They must study **one poetry** text and **one prose** text.

Candidates answer **two** questions. They answer **one** question from each section. **One** question must be on a **poetry** text and **one** question must be on a **prose** text.

Section A Pre-1900 Poetry and Prose

Jane Austen	<i>Pride and Prejudice</i>
*Geoffrey Chaucer	<i>The Merchant's Prologue and Tale</i>
*John Donne	Selected Poems
Thomas Hardy	<i>Far from the Madding Crowd</i>
Bram Stoker	<i>Dracula</i>
*Walt Whitman	Selected Poems from <i>Leaves of Grass</i> (1891–1892)

Section B Post-1900 Poetry and Prose

*Sujata Bhatt	Selected Poems from <i>Point No Point</i>
*Louise Glück	Selected Poems from <i>The Wild Iris</i>
James Joyce	<i>Dubliners</i>
Toni Morrison	<i>Beloved</i>
Jean Rhys	<i>Wide Sargasso Sea</i>
*Natasha Trethewey	<i>Native Guard</i>

* Poetry texts are denoted by an asterisk. Candidates must answer **one poetry** and **one prose** question, each from a different section of the question paper.

Set poems and stories for examination in 2024

Poems and stories for examination in 2024 are listed below.

Maya Angelou: *And Still I Rise* Paper 1, Section B Poetry

Title:	First line:
<i>A Kind of Love, Some Say</i>	Is it true the ribs can tell
<i>Country Lover</i>	Funky blues
<i>Remembrance</i>	Your hands easy
<i>Where We Belong, A Duet</i>	In every town and village,
<i>Phenomenal Woman</i>	Pretty women wonder where my secret lies.
<i>Men</i>	When I was young, I used to
<i>Refusal</i>	Beloved, / In what other lives or lands
<i>Just For A Time</i>	Oh how you used to walk
<i>Junkie Monkey Reel</i>	Shoulders sag,
<i>The Lesson</i>	I keep on dying again.
<i>California Prodigal</i>	The eye follows, the land
<i>My Arkansas</i>	There is a deep brooding
<i>Through the Inner City to the Suburbs</i>	Secured by sooted windows
<i>Lady Luncheon Club</i>	Her counsel was accepted: the times are grave.
<i>Momma Welfare Roll</i>	Her arms semaphore fat triangles,
<i>The Singer Will Not Sing</i>	A benison given. Unused,
<i>Willie</i>	Willie was a man without fame
<i>To Beat the Child Was Bad Enough</i>	A young body, light
<i>Woman Work</i>	I've got the children to tend
<i>One More Round</i>	There ain't no pay beneath the sun
<i>The Traveler</i>	Byways and bygone
<i>Kin</i>	We were entwined in red rings
<i>The Memory</i>	Cotton rows crisscross the world
<i>Still I Rise</i>	You may write me down in history
<i>Ain't That Bad?</i>	Dancin' the funky chicken
<i>Life Doesn't Frighten Me</i>	Shadows on the wall
<i>Bump d'Bump</i>	Play me a game like Blind Man's dance
<i>On Aging</i>	When you see me sitting quietly,
<i>In Retrospect</i>	Last year changed its seasons
<i>Just Like Job</i>	My Lord, My Lord,
<i>Call Letters: Mrs. V.B.</i>	Ships? / Sure I'll sail them.
<i>Thank You, Lord</i>	I see You

Set poems and stories for examination in 2024 continued

Poems and stories for examination in 2024 are listed below.

William Blake: Selected Poems from *Songs of Innocence and of Experience* Paper 1, Section B Poetry

Title:	First line:
<i>Introduction</i>	Piping down the valleys wild
<i>The Shepherd</i>	How sweet is the Shepherds sweet lot,
<i>The Lamb</i>	Little Lamb who made thee
<i>The Little Black Boy</i>	My mother bore me in the southern wild,
<i>The Chimney Sweeper</i>	When my mother died I was very young,
<i>The Little Boy Lost</i>	Father, father, where are you going
<i>The Little Boy Found</i>	The little boy lost in the lonely fen,
<i>A Cradle Song</i>	Sweet dreams form a shade,
<i>The Divine Image</i>	To Mercy Pity Peace and Love,
<i>Holy Thursday</i>	Twas on a Holy Thursday their innocent faces clean
<i>Spring</i>	Sound the Flute!
<i>Nurse's Song</i>	When the voices of children are heard on the green
<i>A Dream</i>	Once a dream did weave a shade,
<i>On Anothers Sorrow</i>	Can I see anothers woe,
<i>Introduction</i>	Hear the voice of the Bard!
<i>Earth's Answer</i>	Earth rais'd up her head,
<i>Holy Thursday</i>	Is this a holy thing to see,
<i>The Little Girl Lost</i>	In futurity
<i>The Little Girl Found</i>	All the night in woe
<i>The Chimney Sweeper</i>	A little black thing among the snow:
<i>Nurses Song</i>	When the voices of children, are heard on the green
<i>The Fly</i>	Little Fly
<i>The Angel</i>	I Dreamt a Dream! what can it mean?
<i>The Tyger</i>	Tyger Tyger, burning bright,
<i>My Pretty Rose Tree</i>	A flower was offerd to me;
<i>The Little Vagabond</i>	Dear Mother, dear Mother, the Church is cold.
<i>London</i>	I wander thro' each charter'd street,
<i>The Human Abstract</i>	Pity would be no more,
<i>A Poison Tree</i>	I was angry with my friend:
<i>A Little Boy Lost</i>	Nought loves another as itself
<i>The School Boy</i>	I love to rise in a summer morn,

Set poems and stories for examination in 2024 continued

Songs of Ourselves: The Cambridge Assessment International Education Anthology of Poetry in English, Volume 2 (ISBN 9781108462280)
Paper 1, Section B Poetry

Poem:	Poet:
<i>The Clod and the Pebble</i>	William Blake
<i>Passion</i>	Kathleen Raine
<i>Winter Song</i>	Elizabeth Tollet
<i>Love (III)</i>	George Herbert
<i>'She was a Phantom of Delight'</i>	William Wordsworth
<i>Surplus Value</i>	David C Ward
<i>Father Returning Home</i>	Dilip Chitre
<i>In the Park</i>	Gwen Harwood
<i>The Lost Woman...</i>	Patricia Beer
<i>Stabat Mater</i>	Sam Hunt
<i>Australia 1970</i>	Judith Wright
<i>Description of Spring</i>	Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey
<i>The Spring</i>	Thomas Carew
<i>The Darkling Thrush</i>	Thomas Hardy
<i>Eel Tail</i>	Alice Oswald
<i>The Buck in the Snow</i>	Edna St Vincent Millay
<i>The Storm-Wind</i>	William Barnes
<i>The Sea and the Hills</i>	Rudyard Kipling
<i>Blessing</i>	Imtiaz Dharker
<i>The Stars Go Over the Lonely Ocean</i>	Robinson Jeffers
<i>The Road</i>	Nancy Fotheringham Cato
<i>Who in One Lifetime</i>	Muriel Rukeyser
<i>The Hour is Come</i>	Louisa Lawson
<i>an afternoon nap</i>	Arthur Yap
<i>from The Complaints of Poverty</i>	Nicholas James
<i>A Long Journey</i>	Musaemura Zimunya
<i>I Hear an Army...</i>	James Joyce
<i>Growing Old</i>	Matthew Arnold
<i>from Fears in Solitude</i>	Samuel Taylor Coleridge
<i>Renouncement</i>	Alice Meynell

Set poems and stories for examination in 2024 continued

Stories of Ourselves: The Cambridge Assessment International Education Anthology of Stories in English, Volume 1 (ISBN 9781108462297)
Paper 2, Section A Prose

Story:

The Yellow Wallpaper

The Son's Veto

The Door in the Wall

An Englishman's Home

The Prison

Billennium

The People Before

Five-Twenty

Report on the Threatened City

Games at Twilight

My Greatest Ambition

To Da-duh, in Memoriam

Of White Hairs and Cricket

Tyres

Real Time

Author:

Charlotte Perkins Gilman

Thomas Hardy

H G Wells

Evelyn Waugh

Bernard Malamud

J G Ballard

Maurice Shadbolt

Patrick White

Doris Lessing

Anita Desai

Morris Lurie

Paule Marshall

Rohinton Mistry

Adam Thorpe

Amit Chaudhuri

Set poems and stories for examination in 2024 continued

John Donne: Selected Poems
Paper 4, Section A Poetry

Title:	First line:
<i>A Nocturnal upon S. Lucy's Day, being the shortest day</i>	'Tis the year's midnight, and it is the day's,
<i>A Valediction: forbidding Mourning</i>	As virtuous men pass mildly away,
<i>Air and Angels</i>	Twice or thrice had I loved thee,
<i>Break of Day</i>	'Tis true, 'tis day, what though it be?
<i>Elegy 5: His Picture</i>	Here take my picture, though I bid farewell;
<i>Elegy 7</i>	Nature's lay idiot, I taught thee to love,
<i>Elegy 9: The Autumnal</i>	No spring, nor summer beauty hath such grace,
<i>Elegy 19: To his Mistress Going to Bed</i>	Come, Madam, come, all rest my powers defy,
<i>Holy Sonnets: Divine Meditations 2</i>	As due by many titles I resign
<i>Holy Sonnets: Divine Meditations 4</i>	Oh my black soul! now thou art summoned
<i>Holy Sonnets: Divine Meditations 6</i>	This is my play's last scene, here heavens appoint
<i>Holy Sonnets: Divine Meditations 7</i>	At the round earth's imagined corners, blow
<i>Holy Sonnets: Divine Meditations 9</i>	If poisonous minerals, and if that tree,
<i>Holy Sonnets: Divine Meditations 10</i>	Death be not proud, though some have called thee
<i>Holy Sonnets: Divine Meditations 14</i>	Batter my heart, three-personed God; for, you
<i>Holy Sonnets: Divine Meditations 17</i>	Since she whom I loved hath paid her last debt
<i>Love's Growth</i>	I scarce believe my love to be so pure
<i>Song</i>	Go, and catch a falling star,
<i>Song</i>	Sweetest love, I do not go,
<i>The Anniversary</i>	All kings, and all their favourites,
<i>The Apparition</i>	When by thy scorn, O murderess, I am dead,
<i>The Bait</i>	Come live with me, and be my love,
<i>The Canonization</i>	For God's sake hold your tongue, and let me love,
<i>The Dream</i>	Dear love, for nothing less than thee
<i>The Ecstasy</i>	Where, like a pillow on a bed,
<i>The Expiration</i>	So, so, break off this last lamenting kiss,
<i>The Flea</i>	Mark but this flea, and mark in this,
<i>The Good Morrow</i>	I wonder by my troth, what thou, and I
<i>The Relic</i>	When my grave is broke up again
<i>The Sun Rising</i>	Busy old fool, unruly sun,
<i>The Undertaking</i>	I have done one braver thing
<i>Twickenam Garden</i>	Blasted with sighs, and surrounded with tears,

Set poems and stories for examination in 2024 continued

Walt Whitman: Selected Poems from *Leaves of Grass* (1891–1892)
Paper 4, Section A Poetry

Title:

*A Noiseless Patient Spider**As I Ebb'd with the Ocean of Life**Beat! Beat! Drums!**How Solemn as One by One**I Hear America Singing**I Saw in Louisiana a Live-Oak Growing**I Sing the Body Electric**In Paths Untrodden**O Captain! My Captain!**O Me! O Life!**Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking**Out of the Rolling Ocean the Crowd**Pioneers! O Pioneers!**The Wound-Dresser**Whoever You Are Holding Me Now in Hand***Sujata Bhatt: Selected Poems from *Point No Point***
Paper 4, Section B Poetry

Title:

*29 April 1989**3 November 1984**A Different History**A Story for Pearse**Angels' Wings**Counting Sheep White Blood Cells**Eurydice Speaks**For Nanabhai Bhatt**Garlic in War and Peace**Genealogy**Go to Ahmedabad**Iris**Marie Curie to Her Husband**Nanabhai Bhatt in Prison**Oranges and Lemons**Orpheus Confesses to Eurydice**Rooms by the Sea**Sujata: The First Disciple of Buddha**The Echoes in Poona**The Langur Coloured Night**The Need to Recall the Journey*

First line:

She's three-months-old now,

I won't buy

Great Pan is not dead;

Reading your new book today

I can recall that age

It was like being ordered

Orpheus, I tell you I'm not in hell,

In this dream my grandfather

In peace they rubbed garlic paste

My daughter

Go walk the streets of Baroda,

Her hand sweeps over the rough grained paper,

The equations are luminous now.

At the foot of Takhteshwar hill

The second time

It was a lack of faith.

It's summer all right.

One morning, a tall lean man

One day the pure, clean rhesus monkeys

It was a cry

Now when she cries

Set poems and stories for examination in 2024 continued

Sujata Bhatt: Selected Poems from *Point No Point* continued **Paper 4, Section B Poetry**

Title:	First line:
<i>The One Who Goes Away</i>	But I am the one
<i>The Peacock</i>	His loud sharp call
<i>The Stare</i>	There is that moment
<i>The Stinking Rose</i>	Everything I want to say is
<i>The Writer</i>	The best story, of course,
<i>Walking Across the Brooklyn Bridge, July 1990</i>	In New York
<i>We are Adrift</i>	At night
<i>What Happened to the Elephant?</i>	What happened to the elephant,

Set poems and stories for examination in 2024 continued

Louise Glück: Selected Poems from *The Wild Iris*
Paper 4, Section B Poetry

Title:	First line:	Page:
<i>The Wild Iris</i>	At the end of my suffering	1
<i>Matins</i>	The sun shines; by the mailbox, leaves	2
<i>Matins</i>	Unreachable father, when we were first	3
<i>Trillium</i>	When I woke up I was in a forest. The dark	4
<i>Lamium</i>	This is how you live when you have a cold heart.	5
<i>Clear Morning</i>	I've watched you long enough,	7
<i>End of Winter</i>	Over the still world, a bird calls	10
<i>Matins</i>	Forgive me if I say I love you: the powerful	12
<i>Retreating Wind</i>	When I made you, I loved you.	15
<i>The Garden</i>	I couldn't do it again,	16
<i>The Hawthorn Tree</i>	Side by side, not	18
<i>Love in Moonlight</i>	Sometimes a man or woman forces his despair	19
<i>Witchgrass</i>	Something / comes into the world unwelcome	22
<i>Matins</i>	What is my heart to you	26
<i>Matins</i>	Not the sun merely but the earth	31
<i>Heaven and Earth</i>	Where one finishes, the other begins.	32
<i>The Doorway</i>	I wanted to stay as I was	33
<i>Midsummer</i>	How can I help you when you all want	34
<i>Vespers</i>	In your extended absence, you permit me	37
<i>End of Summer</i>	After all things occurred to me,	40
<i>Vespers</i>	Even as you appeared to Moses, because	43
<i>Vespers</i>	You thought we didn't know. But we knew once,	44
<i>Early Darkness</i>	How can you say	45
<i>The White Rose</i>	This is the earth? Then	47
<i>Presque Isle</i>	In every life, there's a moment or two.	49
<i>Retreating Light</i>	You were like very young children,	50
<i>Vespers</i>	Your voice is gone now; I hardly hear you.	55
<i>Lullaby</i>	Time to rest now; you have had	58
<i>September Twilight</i>	I gathered you together,	60
<i>The White Lilies</i>	As a man and woman make	63

Set texts for examination in 2025

The set texts listed below are for examination in **2025**.

Set texts regularly rotate on 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.

Paper 1 Drama and Poetry

Learners study **two** set texts, **one** from Section A and **one** from Section B.

Candidates answer **two** questions, **one** from each section.

Section A Drama

Errol John	<i>Moon on a Rainbow Shawl</i>
William Shakespeare	<i>Measure for Measure</i>
John Webster	<i>The Duchess of Malfi</i>
Tennessee Williams	<i>Cat on a Hot Tin Roof</i>

Section B Poetry

Maya Angelou	<i>And Still I Rise</i>
Simon Armitage	<i>Sir Gawain and the Green Knight</i>
William Blake	Selected Poems from <i>Songs of Innocence and of Experience</i>
<i>Songs of Ourselves, Volume 2</i>	Selected Poems

Paper 2 Prose and Unseen

Learners study **one** set text from Section A. For Section B, learners prepare to respond to an unseen text that may be poetry, prose or drama.

Candidates answer **two** questions, **one** from each section.

Section A Prose

Kiran Desai	<i>The Inheritance of Loss</i>
<i>Stories of Ourselves, Volume 1</i>	Selected Stories (new selection from Volume 1 for 2024, 2025 and 2026)
Evelyn Waugh	<i>A Handful of Dust</i>
Colson Whitehead	<i>The Underground Railroad</i>

Section B Unseen

Unseen text

Set texts for examination in 2025 continued

Paper 3 Shakespeare and Drama

Learners study **two** set texts, **one** from Section A and **one** from Section B.

Candidates answer **two** questions, **one** from each section.

Section A Shakespeare

William Shakespeare	<i>Hamlet</i>
William Shakespeare	<i>The Taming of the Shrew</i>

Section B Drama

Lynn Nottage	<i>Sweat</i>
Eugene O'Neill	<i>Long Day's Journey Into Night</i>
Wole Soyinka	<i>Kongi's Harvest</i>

Paper 4 Pre- and Post-1900 Poetry and Prose

Learners study **two** set texts, **one** from Section A and **one** from Section B. They must study **one poetry** text and **one prose** text.

Candidates answer **two** questions. They answer **one** question from each section. **One** question must be on a **poetry** text and **one** question must be on a **prose** text.

Section A Pre-1900 Poetry and Prose

Jane Austen	<i>Pride and Prejudice</i>
*Geoffrey Chaucer	<i>The Merchant's Prologue and Tale</i>
*John Donne	Selected Poems
George Eliot	<i>Middlemarch</i>
Thomas Hardy	<i>Far from the Madding Crowd</i>
*Walt Whitman	Selected Poems from <i>Leaves of Grass</i> (1891–1892)

Section B Post-1900 Poetry and Prose

*Louise Glück	Selected Poems from <i>The Wild Iris</i>
James Joyce	<i>Dubliners</i>
Toni Morrison	<i>Beloved</i>
*Gabriel Okara	Selected Poems from <i>Collected Poems</i> (2016)
Jean Rhys	<i>Wide Sargasso Sea</i>
*Natasha Trethewey	<i>Native Guard</i>

* Poetry texts are denoted by an asterisk. Candidates must answer **one poetry** and **one prose** question, each from a different section of the question paper.

Set poems and stories for examination in 2025

Poems and stories for examination in 2025 are listed below.

Maya Angelou: *And Still I Rise* Paper 1, Section B Poetry

Title:	First line:
<i>A Kind of Love, Some Say</i>	Is it true the ribs can tell
<i>Country Lover</i>	Funky blues
<i>Remembrance</i>	Your hands easy
<i>Where We Belong, A Duet</i>	In every town and village,
<i>Phenomenal Woman</i>	Pretty women wonder where my secret lies.
<i>Men</i>	When I was young, I used to
<i>Refusal</i>	Beloved, / In what other lives or lands
<i>Just For A Time</i>	Oh how you used to walk
<i>Junkie Monkey Reel</i>	Shoulders sag,
<i>The Lesson</i>	I keep on dying again.
<i>California Prodigal</i>	The eye follows, the land
<i>My Arkansas</i>	There is a deep brooding
<i>Through the Inner City to the Suburbs</i>	Secured by sooted windows
<i>Lady Luncheon Club</i>	Her counsel was accepted: the times are grave.
<i>Momma Welfare Roll</i>	Her arms semaphore fat triangles,
<i>The Singer Will Not Sing</i>	A benison given. Unused,
<i>Willie</i>	Willie was a man without fame
<i>To Beat the Child Was Bad Enough</i>	A young body, light
<i>Woman Work</i>	I've got the children to tend
<i>One More Round</i>	There ain't no pay beneath the sun
<i>The Traveler</i>	Byways and bygone
<i>Kin</i>	We were entwined in red rings
<i>The Memory</i>	Cotton rows crisscross the world
<i>Still I Rise</i>	You may write me down in history
<i>Ain't That Bad?</i>	Dancin' the funky chicken
<i>Life Doesn't Frighten Me</i>	Shadows on the wall
<i>Bump d'Bump</i>	Play me a game like Blind Man's dance
<i>On Aging</i>	When you see me sitting quietly,
<i>In Retrospect</i>	Last year changed its seasons
<i>Just Like Job</i>	My Lord, My Lord,
<i>Call Letters: Mrs. V.B.</i>	Ships? / Sure I'll sail them.
<i>Thank You, Lord</i>	I see You

Set poems and stories for examination in 2025 continued

**William Blake: Selected Poems from *Songs of Innocence and of Experience*
Paper 1, Section B Poetry**

Title:	First line:
<i>Introduction</i>	Piping down the valleys wild
<i>The Shepherd</i>	How sweet is the Shepherds sweet lot,
<i>The Lamb</i>	Little Lamb who made thee
<i>The Little Black Boy</i>	My mother bore me in the southern wild,
<i>The Chimney Sweeper</i>	When my mother died I was very young,
<i>The Little Boy Lost</i>	Father, father, where are you going
<i>The Little Boy Found</i>	The little boy lost in the lonely fen,
<i>A Cradle Song</i>	Sweet dreams form a shade,
<i>The Divine Image</i>	To Mercy Pity Peace and Love,
<i>Holy Thursday</i>	Twas on a Holy Thursday their innocent faces clean
<i>Spring</i>	Sound the Flute!
<i>Nurse's Song</i>	When the voices of children are heard on the green
<i>A Dream</i>	Once a dream did weave a shade,
<i>On Anothers Sorrow</i>	Can I see anothers woe,
<i>Introduction</i>	Hear the voice of the Bard!
<i>Earth's Answer</i>	Earth rais'd up her head,
<i>Holy Thursday</i>	Is this a holy thing to see,
<i>The Little Girl Lost</i>	In futurity
<i>The Little Girl Found</i>	All the night in woe
<i>The Chimney Sweeper</i>	A little black thing among the snow:
<i>Nurses Song</i>	When the voices of children, are heard on the green
<i>The Fly</i>	Little Fly
<i>The Angel</i>	I Dreamt a Dream! what can it mean?
<i>The Tyger</i>	Tyger Tyger, burning bright,
<i>My Pretty Rose Tree</i>	A flower was offerd to me;
<i>The Little Vagabond</i>	Dear Mother, dear Mother, the Church is cold.
<i>London</i>	I wander thro' each charter'd street,
<i>The Human Abstract</i>	Pity would be no more,
<i>A Poison Tree</i>	I was angry with my friend:
<i>A Little Boy Lost</i>	Nought loves another as itself
<i>The School Boy</i>	I love to rise in a summer morn,

Set poems and stories for examination in 2025 continued

Songs of Ourselves: The Cambridge Assessment International Education Anthology of Poetry in English, Volume 2 (ISBN 9781108462280)
Paper 1, Section B Poetry

Poem:	Poet:
<i>The Clod and the Pebble</i>	William Blake
<i>Passion</i>	Kathleen Raine
<i>Winter Song</i>	Elizabeth Tollet
<i>Love (III)</i>	George Herbert
<i>'She was a Phantom of Delight'</i>	William Wordsworth
<i>Surplus Value</i>	David C Ward
<i>Father Returning Home</i>	Dilip Chitre
<i>In the Park</i>	Gwen Harwood
<i>The Lost Woman...</i>	Patricia Beer
<i>Stabat Mater</i>	Sam Hunt
<i>Australia 1970</i>	Judith Wright
<i>Description of Spring</i>	Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey
<i>The Spring</i>	Thomas Carew
<i>The Darkling Thrush</i>	Thomas Hardy
<i>Eel Tail</i>	Alice Oswald
<i>The Buck in the Snow</i>	Edna St Vincent Millay
<i>The Storm-Wind</i>	William Barnes
<i>The Sea and the Hills</i>	Rudyard Kipling
<i>Blessing</i>	Imtiaz Dharker
<i>The Stars Go Over the Lonely Ocean</i>	Robinson Jeffers
<i>The Road</i>	Nancy Fotheringham Cato
<i>Who in One Lifetime</i>	Muriel Rukeyser
<i>The Hour is Come</i>	Louisa Lawson
<i>an afternoon nap</i>	Arthur Yap
<i>from The Complaints of Poverty</i>	Nicholas James
<i>A Long Journey</i>	Musaemura Zimunya
<i>I Hear an Army...</i>	James Joyce
<i>Growing Old</i>	Matthew Arnold
<i>from Fears in Solitude</i>	Samuel Taylor Coleridge
<i>Renouncement</i>	Alice Meynell

Set poems and stories for examination in 2025 continued

Stories of Ourselves: The Cambridge Assessment International Education Anthology of Stories in English, Volume 1 (ISBN 9781108462297)
Paper 2, Section A Prose

Story:

The Yellow Wallpaper

The Son's Veto

The Door in the Wall

An Englishman's Home

The Prison

Billennium

The People Before

Five-Twenty

Report on the Threatened City

Games at Twilight

My Greatest Ambition

To Da-duh, in Memoriam

Of White Hairs and Cricket

Tyres

Real Time

Author:

Charlotte Perkins Gilman

Thomas Hardy

H G Wells

Evelyn Waugh

Bernard Malamud

J G Ballard

Maurice Shadbolt

Patrick White

Doris Lessing

Anita Desai

Morris Lurie

Paule Marshall

Rohinton Mistry

Adam Thorpe

Amit Chaudhuri

Set poems and stories for examination in 2025 continued

John Donne: Selected Poems
Paper 4, Section A Poetry

Title:	First line:
<i>A Nocturnal upon S. Lucy's Day, being the shortest day</i>	'Tis the year's midnight, and it is the day's,
<i>A Valediction: forbidding Mourning</i>	As virtuous men pass mildly away,
<i>Air and Angels</i>	Twice or thrice had I loved thee,
<i>Break of Day</i>	'Tis true, 'tis day, what though it be?
<i>Elegy 5: His Picture</i>	Here take my picture, though I bid farewell;
<i>Elegy 7</i>	Nature's lay idiot, I taught thee to love,
<i>Elegy 9: The Autumnal</i>	No spring, nor summer beauty hath such grace,
<i>Elegy 19: To his Mistress Going to Bed</i>	Come, Madam, come, all rest my powers defy,
<i>Holy Sonnets: Divine Meditations 2</i>	As due by many titles I resign
<i>Holy Sonnets: Divine Meditations 4</i>	Oh my black soul! now thou art summoned
<i>Holy Sonnets: Divine Meditations 6</i>	This is my play's last scene, here heavens appoint
<i>Holy Sonnets: Divine Meditations 7</i>	At the round earth's imagined corners, blow
<i>Holy Sonnets: Divine Meditations 9</i>	If poisonous minerals, and if that tree,
<i>Holy Sonnets: Divine Meditations 10</i>	Death be not proud, though some have called thee
<i>Holy Sonnets: Divine Meditations 14</i>	Batter my heart, three-personed God; for, you
<i>Holy Sonnets: Divine Meditations 17</i>	Since she whom I loved hath paid her last debt
<i>Love's Growth</i>	I scarce believe my love to be so pure
<i>Song</i>	Go, and catch a falling star,
<i>Song</i>	Sweetest love, I do not go,
<i>The Anniversary</i>	All kings, and all their favourites,
<i>The Apparition</i>	When by thy scorn, O murderess, I am dead,
<i>The Bait</i>	Come live with me, and be my love,
<i>The Canonization</i>	For God's sake hold your tongue, and let me love,
<i>The Dream</i>	Dear love, for nothing less than thee
<i>The Ecstasy</i>	Where, like a pillow on a bed,
<i>The Expiration</i>	So, so, break off this last lamenting kiss,
<i>The Flea</i>	Mark but this flea, and mark in this,
<i>The Good Morrow</i>	I wonder by my troth, what thou, and I
<i>The Relic</i>	When my grave is broke up again
<i>The Sun Rising</i>	Busy old fool, unruly sun,
<i>The Undertaking</i>	I have done one braver thing
<i>Twickenam Garden</i>	Blasted with sighs, and surrounded with tears,

Set poems and stories for examination in 2025 continued

Walt Whitman: Selected Poems from *Leaves of Grass* (1891–1892)

Paper 4, Section A Poetry

Title:

A Noiseless Patient Spider

As I Ebb'd with the Ocean of Life

Beat! Beat! Drums!

How Solemn as One by One

I Hear America Singing

I Saw in Louisiana a Live-Oak Growing

I Sing the Body Electric

In Paths Untrodden

O Captain! My Captain!

O Me! O Life!

Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking

Out of the Rolling Ocean the Crowd

Pioneers! O Pioneers!

The Wound-Dresser

Whoever You Are Holding Me Now in Hand

Set poems and stories for examination in 2025 continued

Louise Glück: Selected Poems from *The Wild Iris*
Paper 4, Section B Poetry

Title:	First line:	Page:
<i>The Wild Iris</i>	At the end of my suffering	1
<i>Matins</i>	The sun shines; by the mailbox, leaves	2
<i>Matins</i>	Unreachable father, when we were first	3
<i>Trillium</i>	When I woke up I was in a forest. The dark	4
<i>Lamium</i>	This is how you live when you have a cold heart.	5
<i>Clear Morning</i>	I've watched you long enough,	7
<i>End of Winter</i>	Over the still world, a bird calls	10
<i>Matins</i>	Forgive me if I say I love you: the powerful	12
<i>Retreating Wind</i>	When I made you, I loved you.	15
<i>The Garden</i>	I couldn't do it again,	16
<i>The Hawthorn Tree</i>	Side by side, not	18
<i>Love in Moonlight</i>	Sometimes a man or woman forces his despair	19
<i>Witchgrass</i>	Something / comes into the world unwelcome	22
<i>Matins</i>	What is my heart to you	26
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<i>Vespers</i>	In your extended absence, you permit me	37
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<i>Vespers</i>	You thought we didn't know. But we knew once,	44
<i>Early Darkness</i>	How can you say	45
<i>The White Rose</i>	This is the earth? Then	47
<i>Presque Isle</i>	In every life, there's a moment or two.	49
<i>Retreating Light</i>	You were like very young children,	50
<i>Vespers</i>	Your voice is gone now; I hardly hear you.	55
<i>Lullaby</i>	Time to rest now; you have had	58
<i>September Twilight</i>	I gathered you together,	60
<i>The White Lilies</i>	As a man and woman make	63

Set poems and stories for examination in 2025 continued

**Gabriel Okara: Selected Poems from *Collected Poems* (2016)
 Paper 4, Section B Poetry**

Title:	First line:
<i>The Call of the River Nun</i>	I hear your call!
<i>Once Upon a Time</i>	Once upon a time, son,
<i>Pianos and Drums</i>	When at break of day at a riverside
<i>Spirit of the Wind</i>	The storks are coming now —
<i>New Year's Eve Midnight</i>	Now the bells are tolling —
<i>You Laughed and Laughed and Laughed</i>	In your ears my song
<i>The Fisherman's Invocation</i>	1 Introit: Cast your net to the rightside
	2 The Invocation: See the sun in my hands
	3 The Child-Front: The child-Front has come
	4 Birth Dance of the Child-Front: Let's dance with feet
	5 The End: The celebration is now ended
<i>I Am Only a Name</i>	I am only a name
<i>Suddenly the Air Cracks</i>	Suddenly the air cracks
<i>Metaphor of a War</i>	There she sat
<i>Lady and Her Wig</i>	She talked of Paris
<i>Welcome Home</i>	Welcome home to the fatherland
<i>The Dreamer</i>	He was seeking good in our collective good
<i>Bent Double with Weight</i>	Bent double with weight
<i>Complex Matter</i>	I am not one person, I am many things, many persons
<i>Beauty beyond Words</i>	The sun is sinking slowly in chanting colors!
<i>Morbidity</i>	Why do they smile
<i>We Live to Kill and Kill to Live</i>	Hiroshima, Nagasaki — bombs
<i>Ovation Seeker</i>	With drums beating and cymbals crashing
<i>Mass Transit Buses</i>	The governor's exhortations
<i>Contractors</i>	Men and women
<i>Rural Dweller</i>	It's cock-crow!
<i>Rise and Shine</i>	Rise and Shine, O shine
<i>A Boy's Dream</i>	I cling to soft clouds swaying
<i>Babydom Wisdom</i>	In India, 800 million Indians —
<i>Waiting for a Coming</i>	As silent as the silent snow
<i>Salt of the Earth</i>	They wore the mark of recognition —

Set texts for examination in 2026

The set texts listed below are for examination in **2026**.

Set texts regularly rotate on 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.

Paper 1 Drama and Poetry

Learners study **two** set texts, **one** from Section A and **one** from Section B.

Candidates answer **two** questions, **one** from each section.

Section A Drama

Edward Albee	<i>Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?</i>
Errol John	<i>Moon on a Rainbow Shawl</i>
William Shakespeare	<i>The Tempest</i>
John Webster	<i>The Duchess of Malfi</i>

Section B Poetry

Maya Angelou	<i>And Still I Rise</i>
William Blake	Selected Poems from <i>Songs of Innocence and of Experience</i>
Sylvia Plath	Selected Poems from <i>Ariel</i> (1965)
<i>Songs of Ourselves, Volume 2</i>	Selected Poems (new selection for 2026)

Paper 2 Prose and Unseen

Learners study **one** set text from Section A. For Section B, learners prepare to respond to an unseen text that may be poetry, prose or drama.

Candidates answer **two** questions, **one** from each section.

Section A Prose

Kiran Desai	<i>The Inheritance of Loss</i>
<i>Stories of Ourselves, Volume 1</i>	Selected Stories (new selection from Volume 1 for 2024, 2025 and 2026)
Evelyn Waugh	<i>A Handful of Dust</i>
Colson Whitehead	<i>The Underground Railroad</i>

Section B Unseen

Unseen text

Set texts for examination in 2026 continued

Paper 3 Shakespeare and Drama

Learners study **two** set texts, **one** from Section A and **one** from Section B.

Candidates answer **two** questions, **one** from each section.

Section A Shakespeare

William Shakespeare	<i>Hamlet</i>
William Shakespeare	<i>The Taming of the Shrew</i>

Section B Drama

Lynn Nottage	<i>Sweat</i>
Eugene O'Neill	<i>Long Day's Journey Into Night</i>
Wole Soyinka	<i>Kongi's Harvest</i>

Paper 4 Pre- and Post-1900 Poetry and Prose

Learners study **two** set texts, **one** from Section A and **one** from Section B. They must study **one poetry** text and **one prose** text.

Candidates answer **two** questions. They answer **one** question from each section. **One** question must be on a **poetry** text and **one** question must be on a **prose** text.

Section A Pre-1900 Poetry and Prose

Jane Austen	<i>Pride and Prejudice</i>
*Geoffrey Chaucer	<i>The Wife of Bath's Prologue and Tale</i>
George Eliot	<i>Middlemarch</i>
Thomas Hardy	<i>Jude the Obscure</i>
*William Shakespeare	Selected Sonnets
*Walt Whitman	Selected Poems from <i>Leaves of Grass</i> (1891–1892)

Section B Post-1900 Poetry and Prose

J M Coetzee	<i>Waiting for the Barbarians</i>
*Louise Glück	Selected Poems from <i>The Wild Iris</i>
Katherine Mansfield	Selected Stories
Toni Morrison	<i>Beloved</i>
*Gabriel Okara	Selected Poems from <i>Collected Poems</i> (2016)
*Natasha Trethewey	<i>Native Guard</i>

* Poetry texts are denoted by an asterisk. Candidates must answer **one poetry** and **one prose** question, each from a different section of the question paper.

Set poems and stories for examination in 2026

Poems and stories for examination in 2026 are listed below.

Maya Angelou: *And Still I rise* Paper 1, Section B Poetry

Title:	First line:
<i>A Kind of Love, Some Say</i>	Is it true the ribs can tell
<i>Country Lover</i>	Funky blues
<i>Remembrance</i>	Your hands easy
<i>Where We Belong, A Duet</i>	In every town and village,
<i>Phenomenal Woman</i>	Pretty women wonder where my secret lies.
<i>Men</i>	When I was young, I used to
<i>Refusal</i>	Beloved, / In what other lives or lands
<i>Just For A Time</i>	Oh how you used to walk
<i>Junkie Monkey Reel</i>	Shoulders sag,
<i>The Lesson</i>	I keep on dying again.
<i>California Prodigal</i>	The eye follows, the land
<i>My Arkansas</i>	There is a deep brooding
<i>Through the Inner City to the Suburbs</i>	Secured by sooted windows
<i>Lady Luncheon Club</i>	Her counsel was accepted: the times are grave.
<i>Momma Welfare Roll</i>	Her arms semaphore fat triangles,
<i>The Singer Will Not Sing</i>	A benison given. Unused,
<i>Willie</i>	Willie was a man without fame
<i>To Beat the Child Was Bad Enough</i>	A young body, light
<i>Woman Work</i>	I've got the children to tend
<i>One More Round</i>	There ain't no pay beneath the sun
<i>The Traveler</i>	Byways and bygone
<i>Kin</i>	We were entwined in red rings
<i>The Memory</i>	Cotton rows crisscross the world
<i>Still I Rise</i>	You may write me down in history
<i>Ain't That Bad?</i>	Dancin' the funky chicken
<i>Life Doesn't Frighten Me</i>	Shadows on the wall
<i>Bump d'Bump</i>	Play me a game like Blind Man's dance
<i>On Aging</i>	When you see me sitting quietly,
<i>In Retrospect</i>	Last year changed its seasons
<i>Just Like Job</i>	My Lord, My Lord,
<i>Call Letters: Mrs. V.B.</i>	Ships? / Sure I'll sail them.
<i>Thank You, Lord</i>	I see You

Set poems and stories for examination in 2026 continued

**William Blake: Selected Poems from *Songs of Innocence and of Experience*
Paper 1, Section B Poetry**

Title:	First line:
<i>Introduction</i>	Piping down the valleys wild
<i>The Shepherd</i>	How sweet is the Shepherds sweet lot,
<i>The Lamb</i>	Little Lamb who made thee
<i>The Little Black Boy</i>	My mother bore me in the southern wild,
<i>The Chimney Sweeper</i>	When my mother died I was very young,
<i>The Little Boy Lost</i>	Father, father, where are you going
<i>The Little Boy Found</i>	The little boy lost in the lonely fen,
<i>A Cradle Song</i>	Sweet dreams form a shade,
<i>The Divine Image</i>	To Mercy Pity Peace and Love,
<i>Holy Thursday</i>	Tw'as on a Holy Thursday their innocent faces clean
<i>Spring</i>	Sound the Flute!
<i>Nurse's Song</i>	When the voices of children are heard on the green
<i>A Dream</i>	Once a dream did weave a shade,
<i>On Anothers Sorrow</i>	Can I see anothers woe,
<i>Introduction</i>	Hear the voice of the Bard!
<i>Earth's Answer</i>	Earth rais'd up her head,
<i>Holy Thursday</i>	Is this a holy thing to see,
<i>The Little Girl Lost</i>	In futurity
<i>The Little Girl Found</i>	All the night in woe
<i>The Chimney Sweeper</i>	A little black thing among the snow:
<i>Nurses Song</i>	When the voices of children, are heard on the green
<i>The Fly</i>	Little Fly
<i>The Angel</i>	I Dreamt a Dream! what can it mean?
<i>The Tyger</i>	Tyger Tyger, burning bright,
<i>My Pretty Rose Tree</i>	A flower was offerd to me;
<i>The Little Vagabond</i>	Dear Mother, dear Mother, the Church is cold.
<i>London</i>	I wander thro' each charter'd street,
<i>The Human Abstract</i>	Pity would be no more,
<i>A Poison Tree</i>	I was angry with my friend:
<i>A Little Boy Lost</i>	Nought loves another as itself
<i>The School Boy</i>	I love to rise in a summer morn,

Set poems and stories for examination in 2026 continued

Sylvia Plath: Selected Poems from *Ariel* (1965)
Paper 1, Section B Poetry

Title:	First line:
<i>Morning Song</i>	Love set you going like a fat gold watch.
<i>Sheep in Fog</i>	The hills step off into whiteness.
<i>The Applicant</i>	First, are you our sort of a person?
<i>Lady Lazarus</i>	I have done it again.
<i>Tulips</i>	The tulips are too excitable, it is winter here.
<i>Cut</i>	What a thrill —
<i>Elm</i>	I know the bottom, she says. I know it with my great tap root:
<i>Poppies in October</i>	Even the sun-clouds this morning cannot manage such skirts.
<i>Ariel</i>	Stasis in darkness.
<i>Death & Co.</i>	Two, of course there are two.
<i>Getting There</i>	How far is it?
<i>Medusa</i>	Off that landspit of stony mouth-plugs,
<i>The Moon and the Yew Tree</i>	This is the light of the mind, cold and planetary.
<i>A Birthday Present</i>	What is this, behind this veil, is it ugly, is it beautiful?
<i>Letter in November</i>	Love, the world
<i>The Rival</i>	If the moon smiled, she would resemble you.
<i>Daddy</i>	You do not do, you do not do
<i>You're</i>	Clownlike, happiest on your hands,
<i>Fever 103°</i>	Pure? What does it mean?
<i>Stings</i>	Bare-handed, I hand the combs.
<i>Little Fugue</i>	The yew's black fingers wag;
<i>Years</i>	They enter as animals from the outer
<i>The Munich Mannequins</i>	Perfection is terrible, it cannot have children.
<i>Paralytic</i>	It happens. Will it go on? —
<i>Balloons</i>	Since Christmas they have lived with us,
<i>Poppies in July</i>	Little poppies, little hell flames,
<i>Kindness</i>	Kindness glides about my house.
<i>Edge</i>	The woman is perfected.

Set poems and stories for examination in 2026 continued

Songs of Ourselves: The Cambridge Assessment International Education Anthology of Poetry in English, Volume 2 (ISBN 9781108462280)
Paper 1, Section B Poetry

Title:	Poet:
<i>Last Sonnet</i>	John Keats
<i>The Bargain</i>	Sir Philip Sidney
<i>To My Dear and Loving Husband</i>	Anne Bradstreet
<i>Tiger in the Menagerie</i>	Emma Jones
<i>lion heart</i>	Amanda Chong
<i>Heart and Mind</i>	Edith Sitwell
<i>In Praise of Creation</i>	Elizabeth Jennings
<i>Upon a Wasp Chilled with Cold</i>	Edward Taylor
<i>'Blessed by the Indifference...'</i> (from <i>The Flowers of Crete</i>)	Christopher Reid
<i>The Poplar-Field</i>	William Cowper
<i>Afternoon with Irish Cows</i>	Billy Collins
<i>London Snow</i>	Robert Bridges
<i>Excelsior</i>	Henry Wadsworth Longfellow
<i>The Border Builder</i>	Carol Rumens
<i>The Migrant</i>	A L Hendriks
<i>The White House</i>	Claude McKay
<i>The Song of the Shirt</i>	Thomas Hood
<i>To a Millionaire</i>	A R D Fairburn
<i>Amoretti, Sonnet 86</i>	Edmund Spenser
<i>Homecoming</i>	Lenrie Peters
<i>I Years had been from Home</i>	Emily Dickinson
<i>The Exequy</i>	Henry King
<i>Old Man & Very Old Man</i>	James Henry
<i>Late Wisdom</i>	George Crabbe
<i>'I Have a Rendezvous with Death'</i>	Alan Seeger
<i>Song</i>	Alun Lewis
<i>The Dead Knight</i>	John Masefield
<i>From the Coptic</i>	Stevie Smith
<i>I Dream of You...</i>	Christina Rossetti
<i>Sleep</i>	Kenneth Slessor

Set poems and stories for examination in 2026 continued

**Stories of Ourselves, The Cambridge Assessment International Education Anthology of Stories in English, Volume 1 (ISBN 9781108462297)
Paper 2, Section A Prose**

Story:

The Yellow Wallpaper

The Son's Veto

The Door in the Wall

An Englishman's Home

The Prison

Billennium

The People Before

Five-Twenty

Report on the Threatened City

Games at Twilight

My Greatest Ambition

To Da-duh, in Memoriam

Of White Hairs and Cricket

Tyres

Real Time

Author:

Charlotte Perkins Gilman

Thomas Hardy

H G Wells

Evelyn Waugh

Bernard Malamud

J G Ballard

Maurice Shadbolt

Patrick White

Doris Lessing

Anita Desai

Morris Lurie

Paule Marshall

Rohinton Mistry

Adam Thorpe

Amit Chaudhuri

Set poems and stories for examination in 2026 continued

William Shakespeare: Selected Sonnets
Paper 4, Section A Poetry

Title:	First line:
<i>Sonnet 2</i>	When forty winters shall besiege thy brow,
<i>Sonnet 12</i>	When I do count the clock that tells the time,
<i>Sonnet 16</i>	But wherefore do not you a mightier way
<i>Sonnet 17</i>	Who will believe my verse in time to come,
<i>Sonnet 23</i>	As an unperfect actor on the stage
<i>Sonnet 29</i>	When in disgrace with Fortune and men's eyes,
<i>Sonnet 54</i>	O, how much more doth beauty beauteous seem
<i>Sonnet 55</i>	Not marble nor the gilded monuments
<i>Sonnet 60</i>	Like as the waves make towards the pebbled shore,
<i>Sonnet 63</i>	Against my love shall be as I am now,
<i>Sonnet 65</i>	Since brass, nor stone, nor earth, nor boundless sea,
<i>Sonnet 71</i>	No longer mourn for me when I am dead
<i>Sonnet 75</i>	So are you to my thoughts as food to life,
<i>Sonnet 76</i>	Why is my verse so barren of new pride?
<i>Sonnet 81</i>	Or I shall live your epitaph to make,
<i>Sonnet 84</i>	Who is it that says most which can say more
<i>Sonnet 94</i>	They that have power to hurt and will do none,
<i>Sonnet 97</i>	How like a winter hath my absence been
<i>Sonnet 104</i>	To me, fair friend, you never can be old,
<i>Sonnet 115</i>	Those lines that I before have writ do lie;
<i>Sonnet 116</i>	Let me not to the marriage of true minds
<i>Sonnet 123</i>	No, Time, thou shalt not boast that I do change.
<i>Sonnet 124</i>	If my dear love were but the child of state,
<i>Sonnet 127</i>	In the old age black was not counted fair,
<i>Sonnet 129</i>	Th' expense of spirit in a waste of shame
<i>Sonnet 130</i>	My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun;
<i>Sonnet 138</i>	When my love swears that she is made of truth,
<i>Sonnet 141</i>	In faith, I do not love thee with mine eyes,
<i>Sonnet 144</i>	Two loves I have, of comfort and despair,
<i>Sonnet 147</i>	My love is as a fever, longing still

Set poems and stories for examination in 2026 continued

Walt Whitman: Selected Poems from *Leaves of Grass* (1891–1892) Paper 4, Section A Poetry

Title:

A Noiseless Patient Spider

As I Ebb'd with the Ocean of Life

Beat! Beat! Drums!

How Solemn as One by One

I Hear America Singing

I Saw in Louisiana a Live-Oak Growing

I Sing the Body Electric

In Paths Untrodden

O Captain! My Captain!

O Me! O Life!

Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking

Out of the Rolling Ocean the Crowd

Pioneers! O Pioneers!

The Wound-Dresser

Whoever You Are Holding Me Now in Hand

Set poems and stories for examination in 2026 continued

Louise Glück: Selected Poems from *The Wild Iris*
Paper 4, Section B Poetry

Title:	First line:	Page:
<i>The Wild Iris</i>	At the end of my suffering	1
<i>Matins</i>	The sun shines; by the mailbox, leaves	2
<i>Matins</i>	Unreachable father, when we were first	3
<i>Trillium</i>	When I woke up I was in a forest. The dark	4
<i>Lamium</i>	This is how you live when you have a cold heart.	5
<i>Clear Morning</i>	I've watched you long enough,	7
<i>End of Winter</i>	Over the still world, a bird calls	10
<i>Matins</i>	Forgive me if I say I love you: the powerful	12
<i>Retreating Wind</i>	When I made you, I loved you.	15
<i>The Garden</i>	I couldn't do it again,	16
<i>The Hawthorn Tree</i>	Side by side, not	18
<i>Love in Moonlight</i>	Sometimes a man or woman forces his despair	19
<i>Witchgrass</i>	Something / comes into the world unwelcome	22
<i>Matins</i>	What is my heart to you	26
<i>Matins</i>	Not the sun merely but the earth	31
<i>Heaven and Earth</i>	Where one finishes, the other begins.	32
<i>The Doorway</i>	I wanted to stay as I was	33
<i>Midsummer</i>	How can I help you when you all want	34
<i>Vespers</i>	In your extended absence, you permit me	37
<i>End of Summer</i>	After all things occurred to me,	40
<i>Vespers</i>	Even as you appeared to Moses, because	43
<i>Vespers</i>	You thought we didn't know. But we knew once,	44
<i>Early Darkness</i>	How can you say	45
<i>The White Rose</i>	This is the earth? Then	47
<i>Presque Isle</i>	In every life, there's a moment or two.	49
<i>Retreating Light</i>	You were like very young children,	50
<i>Vespers</i>	Your voice is gone now; I hardly hear you.	55
<i>Lullaby</i>	Time to rest now; you have had	58
<i>September Twilight</i>	I gathered you together,	60
<i>The White Lilies</i>	As a man and woman make	63

Set poems and stories for examination in 2026 continued

Katherine Mansfield: Selected Stories **Paper 4, Section B Prose**

Story:

Frau Brechenmacher Attends a Wedding

Something Childish but very Natural

The Wind Blows

Prelude

A Dill Pickle

'Je ne parle pas français'

Bliss

Miss Brill

The Daughters of the Late Colonel

Life of Ma Parker

Marriage à la Mode

At the Bay

The Voyage

The Garden Party

A Cup of Tea

Set poems and stories for examination in 2026 continued

**Gabriel Okara: Selected Poems from *Collected Poems (2016)*
 Paper 4, Section B Poetry**

Title:	First line:
<i>The Call of the River Nun</i>	I hear your call!
<i>Once Upon a Time</i>	Once upon a time, son,
<i>Pianos and Drums</i>	When at break of day at a riverside
<i>Spirit of the Wind</i>	The storks are coming now —
<i>New Year's Eve Midnight</i>	Now the bells are tolling —
<i>You Laughed and Laughed and Laughed</i>	In your ears my song
<i>The Fisherman's Invocation</i>	1 Introit: Cast your net to the rightside
	2 The Invocation: See the sun in my hands
	3 The Child-Front: The child-Front has come
	4 Birth Dance of the Child-Front: Let's dance with feet
	5 The End: The celebration is now ended
<i>I Am Only a Name</i>	I am only a name
<i>Suddenly the Air Cracks</i>	Suddenly the air cracks
<i>Metaphor of a War</i>	There she sat
<i>Lady and Her Wig</i>	She talked of Paris
<i>Welcome Home</i>	Welcome home to the fatherland
<i>The Dreamer</i>	He was seeking good in our collective good
<i>Bent Double with Weight</i>	Bent double with weight
<i>Complex Matter</i>	I am not one person, I am many things, many persons
<i>Beauty beyond Words</i>	The sun is sinking slowly in chanting colors!
<i>Morbidity</i>	Why do they smile
<i>We Live to Kill and Kill to Live</i>	Hiroshima, Nagasaki — bombs
<i>Ovation Seeker</i>	With drums beating and cymbals crashing
<i>Mass Transit Buses</i>	The governor's exhortations
<i>Contractors</i>	Men and women
<i>Rural Dweller</i>	It's cock-crow!
<i>Rise and Shine</i>	Rise and Shine, O shine
<i>A Boy's Dream</i>	I cling to soft clouds swaying
<i>Babydom Wisdom</i>	In India, 800 million Indians —
<i>Waiting for a Coming</i>	As silent as the silent snow
<i>Salt of the Earth</i>	They wore the mark of recognition —

Editions of set texts used for setting passages in the examination

Examination questions, passages and poems will be set from the editions of the texts specified below.

Paper 1: Drama and Poetry

Author	Text	Publisher
Albee, Edward	<i>Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?</i>	Vintage Publishing
Angelou, Maya	<i>And Still I Rise</i>	Virago
Armitage, Simon	<i>Sir Gawain and the Green Knight</i>	Faber and Faber
Blake, William	Selected Poems from <i>Songs of Innocence and of Experience</i> from 'William Blake: The Complete Poems'	Penguin Classics
John, Errol	<i>Moon on a Rainbow Shawl</i>	Faber and Faber
Plath, Sylvia	Selected Poems from <i>Ariel</i> (1965)	Faber and Faber
Shakespeare, William	<i>Measure for Measure</i> and <i>The Tempest</i> from 'The Complete works of William Shakespeare: The Alexander Text'	Collins
<i>Songs of Ourselves, Volume 2</i>	Selected Poems	Cambridge University Press
Webster, John	<i>The Duchess of Malfi</i> from 'The Duchess of Malfi and Other Plays'	Oxford World's Classics
Williams, Tennessee	<i>Cat on a Hot Tin Roof</i> *	Penguin Modern Classics (2009)

*Examination questions and passages will **not** be set based on the alternative 'Broadway Version' of Act 3 appended to the Penguin Modern Classics (2009) edition of the play.

Paper 2: Prose and Unseen

Author	Text	Publisher
Desai, Kiran	<i>The Inheritance of Loss</i>	Penguin
McEwan, Ian	<i>Atonement</i>	Vintage
<i>Stories of Ourselves, Volume 1</i>	Selected Stories	Cambridge University Press
Twain, Mark	<i>The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*</i>	Penguin Classics
Waugh, Evelyn	<i>A Handful of Dust</i>	Penguin Modern Classics
Whitehead, Colson	<i>The Underground Railroad</i>	Fleet

*For the avoidance of doubt, examination questions will **not** be set based on 'The Raft Episode' (also known as 'The Raftsmen's Passage') appended to the Penguin Classics version of *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.

Paper 3: Shakespeare and Drama

Author	Text	Publisher
Fugard, Athol	<i>The Train Driver and Other Plays (The Train Driver, Coming Home, Have You Seen Us?)</i>	Theatre Communications Group / Nick Hern Books
Nottage, Lynn	<i>Sweat</i>	Theatre Communications Group / Nick Hern Books
O'Neill, Eugene	<i>Long Day's Journey Into Night</i>	National Theatre
Shakespeare, William	<i>The Merchant of Venice, Hamlet and The Taming of the Shrew</i> from 'The Complete works of William Shakespeare: The Alexander Text'	Collins
Soyinka, Wole	<i>Kongi's Harvest</i> from 'Collected Plays 2'	Oxford University Press
Stephenson, Shelagh	<i>An Experiment with an Air Pump</i>	Methuen

Paper 4: Pre-1900 and Post-1900 Poetry and Prose

Author	Text	Publisher
Austen, Jane	<i>Pride and Prejudice</i>	Penguin Classics
*Bhatt, Sujata	Selected Poems from <i>Point No Point</i>	Carcanet
*Chaucer, Geoffrey	<i>The Merchant's Prologue and Tale</i> and <i>Wife of Bath's Prologue and Tale</i> from 'The Riverside Chaucer'	Oxford University Press
Coetzee, J M	<i>Waiting for the Barbarians</i>	Vintage
*Donne, John	Selected Poems from <i>The Complete English Poems</i>	Penguin Classics
Eliot, George	<i>Middlemarch</i>	Penguin Classics
*Glück, Louise	Selected Poems from <i>The Wild Iris</i>	Carcanet
Hardy, Thomas	<i>Far from the Madding Crowd</i>	Penguin Classics
Hardy, Thomas	<i>Jude the Obscure</i>	Penguin Classics
Joyce, James	<i>Dubliners</i>	Oxford University Press
Mansfield, Katherine	Selected Stories from <i>Selected Stories</i>	Oxford World's Classics
Morrison, Toni	<i>Beloved</i>	Vintage
*Okara, Gabriel	Selected Poems from <i>Collected Poems</i> (2016)	University of Nebraska Press
Rhys, Jean	<i>Wide Sargasso Sea</i>	Penguin Modern Classics
*Shakespeare, William	Selected Sonnets from <i>The Complete Works of William Shakespeare: The Alexander Text</i>	Collins
Stoker, Bram	<i>Dracula</i>	Wordsworth Classics
*Trethewey, Natasha	<i>Native Guard</i>	Mariner
*Whitman, Walt	Selected Poems from <i>Leaves of Grass</i> from 'The Complete Poems'	Penguin Classics

* Poetry texts are denoted by an asterisk. Centres must check the set texts for the year in which candidates will sit examinations. Candidates must answer **one poetry** and **one prose** question, each from a different section of the question paper.

4 Details of the assessment

Paper 1 Drama and Poetry

Written paper, 2 hours, 50 marks

This paper has two sections, Section A: Drama and Section B: Poetry. Each section is worth 25 marks.

Candidates must answer **two** questions: **one** question from a choice of Drama set texts in Section A and **one** question from a choice of Poetry set texts in Section B.

On each set text, candidates will have a choice between two questions (a) or (b). Each requires an essay length response. The (b) question will be based on a passage or a poem from the set text printed on the question paper. Candidates may choose the type of question they wish to answer.

Candidates must demonstrate the following:

- knowledge and understanding of the set text they have studied and an appreciation of relevant contexts
- analysis of the ways in which writers' choices shape meaning and create effects
- an informed, independent opinion about the text studied
- appropriate communication of literary ideas and arguments.

All questions on this paper assess four assessment objectives: AO1, AO2, AO3 and AO4.

Set texts are **not** allowed in the examination room.

Set texts are listed in section 3 Subject content.

Dictionaries may **not** be used.

Paper 2 Prose and Unseen

Written paper, 2 hours, 50 marks

This paper has two sections, Section A: Prose and Section B: Unseen. Each section is worth 25 marks.

Candidates must answer **two** questions: **one** question from a choice of Prose set texts in Section A and **one** question from a choice of two previously unseen texts in Section B.

Section A: Prose

On each set text, candidates will have a choice between two questions (a) or (b). Each requires an essay length response. The (b) question will be based on a passage from the set text printed on the question paper. Candidates may choose the type of question they wish to answer.

Candidates must demonstrate the following:

- knowledge and understanding of the set text they have studied and an appreciation of relevant contexts
- analysis of the ways in which writers' choices shape meaning and create effects
- an informed, independent opinion about the text studied
- appropriate communication of literary ideas and arguments.

All questions in this section assess four assessment objectives: AO1, AO2, AO3 and AO4.

Set texts are **not** allowed in the examination room.

Set texts are listed in section 3 Subject content.

Dictionaries may **not** be used.

Section B: Unseen

Candidates answer **one** question from a choice of two.

- Candidates write a response to previously unseen literary material printed on the question paper.
- The passages cover two of the categories: prose, poetry and drama.
- All passages are from works originally written in English.

The questions will test candidates' ability to read literature critically and to demonstrate, by informed discussion and opinion, an understanding of the ways in which meaning is expressed through a writer's choices of language, form and structure.

The authors and dates of the passages will not be given. Knowledge of the literary or historical background is not expected.

Candidates must demonstrate the following:

- knowledge and understanding of the text type which helps to inform a response
- analysis of the ways in which writers' choices shape meaning and create effects
- an informed, independent opinion about the text studied
- appropriate communication of literary ideas and arguments.

All questions in this section assess four assessment objectives: AO1, AO2, AO3 and AO4.

Dictionaries may **not** be used.

Paper 3 Shakespeare and Drama

Written paper, 2 hours, 50 marks

This paper has two sections, Section A: Shakespeare and Section B: Drama. Each section is worth 25 marks.

Candidates must answer **two** questions: **one** question from a choice of Shakespeare plays in Section A and **one** question from a choice of Drama set texts in Section B.

On each set text, candidates will have a choice between two questions (a) or (b). Each requires an essay length response. The (b) question will be based on a passage from the set text printed on the question paper. Candidates may choose the type of question they wish to answer.

Candidates must demonstrate the following:

- knowledge and understanding of the set text they have studied and an appreciation of relevant contexts
- analysis of the ways in which writers' choices shape meaning and create effects
- an informed, independent opinion about the text studied
- appropriate communication of literary ideas and arguments
- an ability to discuss and evaluate different opinions and interpretations of texts.

All questions on this paper assess all five assessment objectives: AO1, AO2, AO3, AO4 and AO5.

Set texts are **not** allowed in the examination room.

Set texts are listed in section 3 Subject content.

Dictionaries may **not** be used.

Paper 4 Pre- and Post-1900 Poetry and Prose

Written paper, 2 hours, 50 marks

This paper has two sections, Section A: Pre-1900 Poetry and Prose and Section B: Post-1900 Poetry and Prose. Each section is worth 25 marks.

Candidates must answer **two** questions: **one** question from a choice of pre-1900 poetry and prose set texts in Section A and **one** question from a choice of post-1900 poetry and prose set texts in Section B.

Candidates must write **one essay on a poetry set text** and **one essay on a prose set text**.

On each set text, candidates will have a choice between two questions (a) or (b). Each requires an essay length response. The (b) question will be based on a passage or a poem from the set text printed on the question paper. Candidates may choose the type of question they wish to answer.

Candidates must demonstrate the following:

- knowledge and understanding of the set text they have studied and an appreciation of relevant contexts
- analysis of the ways in which writers' choices shape meaning and create effects
- an informed, independent opinion about the text studied
- appropriate communication of literary ideas and arguments
- an ability to discuss and evaluate different opinions and interpretations of texts.

All questions on this paper assess all five assessment objectives: AO1, AO2, AO3, AO4 and AO5.

Set texts are **not** allowed in the examination room.

Set texts are listed in section 3 Subject content.

Dictionaries may **not** be used.

Command words

Command words and their meanings help candidates know what is expected from them in the exam. 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
Analyse	examine in detail to show meaning, identify elements and the relationship between them
Assess	make an informed judgement
Comment	give an informed opinion
Compare	identify/comment on similarities and/or differences
Consider	review and respond to given information
Contrast	identify/comment on differences
Demonstrate	show how or give an example
Describe	state the points of a topic / give characteristics and main features
Develop	take forward to a more advanced stage or build upon given information
Discuss	write about issue(s) or topic(s) in depth in a structured way
Examine	investigate closely, in detail
Explain	set out purposes or reasons / make the relationships between things evident / provide why and/or how and support with relevant evidence
Suggest	apply knowledge and understanding to situations where there are a range of valid responses in order to make proposals

Phrases such as 'In what ways ... ?' and 'How far, and in what ways' may also be seen in the assessment for this syllabus

5 What else you need to know

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

Before you start

Previous study

We recommend that learners starting this course should have completed a course in English equivalent to Cambridge IGCSE™ or Cambridge O Level and should have a level of English equivalent to first language English at IGCSE.

Guided learning hours

We design Cambridge International AS & A Level syllabuses based on learners having about 180 guided learning hours for each Cambridge International AS Level and about 360 guided learning hours for a Cambridge International A Level. The number of hours a learner needs to achieve the qualification may vary according to local practice and their previous experience of the subject.

Availability and timetables

You can enter candidates in the June and November exam series. If your school is in India, you can enter your candidates in the March exam series. You can view the timetable for your administrative zone at www.cambridgeinternational.org/timetables

Private candidates can enter for this syllabus.

Combining with other syllabuses

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

- Cambridge International AS Level Language and Literature in English (8695)
- syllabuses with the same title at the same level.

Group awards: Cambridge AICE

Cambridge AICE (Advanced International Certificate of Education) is a group award for Cambridge International AS & A Level. It allows schools to offer a broad and balanced curriculum by recognising the achievements of learners who pass exams in a range of different subjects.

Learn more about Cambridge AICE at www.cambridgeinternational.org/aice

Making entries

Exams officers are responsible for submitting entries to Cambridge International. 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 a copy of 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 one 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 your 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

Retakes and carry forward

Candidates can retake Cambridge International AS Level and Cambridge International A Level as many times as they want to. Cambridge International AS & A Levels are linear qualifications so candidates cannot re-sit individual components. Information on retake entries is in the *Cambridge Handbook* at www.cambridgeinternational.org/examsofficers

Candidates can carry forward the result of their Cambridge International AS Level assessment from one series to complete the Cambridge International A Level in a following series, subject to the rules and time limits described in the *Cambridge Handbook*.

Language

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

Accessibility and equality

Syllabus and assessment design

Cambridge International works to avoid direct or indirect discrimination in our syllabuses and assessment materials. We aim to maximise inclusivity for candidates of all national, cultural or social backgrounds and with other protected characteristics. In addition, the language and layout used are designed to make our materials as accessible as possible. This gives all learners the opportunity, as fairly as possible, to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and understanding and helps to minimise the requirement to make reasonable adjustments during the assessment process.

Access arrangements

Access arrangements (including modified papers) are the principal way in which Cambridge International complies with our duty, as guided by the UK Equality Act (2010), to make 'reasonable adjustments' for candidates with special educational needs (SEN), disability, illness or injury. Where a candidate would otherwise be at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to a candidate with no SEN, disability, illness or injury, we may be able to agree pre-examination access arrangements. These arrangements help a candidate by minimising accessibility barriers and maximising their opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and understanding in an assessment.

Important:

- Requested access arrangements should be based on evidence of the candidate's barrier to assessment and should also reflect their normal way of working at school; this is in line with *The Cambridge Handbook* www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide
- For Cambridge International to approve an access arrangement, we will need to agree that it constitutes a reasonable adjustment, involves reasonable cost and timeframe and does not affect the security and integrity of the assessment.
- Availability of access arrangements should be checked by centres at the start of the course. Details of our standard access arrangements and modified question papers are available in *The Cambridge Handbook* www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide
- Please contact us at the start of the course to find out if we are able to approve an arrangement that is not included in the list of standard access arrangements.
- Candidates who cannot access parts of the assessment may be able to receive an award based on the parts they have completed.

After the exam

Grading and reporting

Grades A*, A, B, C, D or E indicate the standard a candidate achieved at Cambridge International A Level. A* is the highest and E is the lowest grade.

Grades a, b, c, d or e indicate the standard a candidate achieved at Cambridge International AS Level. 'a' is the highest and 'e' is the lowest grade.

'Ungraded' means that the candidate's performance did not meet the standard required for the lowest grade (E or 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.

If a candidate takes a Cambridge International A Level and fails to achieve grade E or higher, a Cambridge International AS Level grade will be awarded if both of the following apply:

- the components taken for the Cambridge International A Level by the candidate in that series included all the components making up a Cambridge International AS Level
- the candidate's performance on the AS Level components was sufficient to merit the award of a Cambridge International AS Level grade.

On the statement of results and certificates, Cambridge International AS & A Levels are shown as General Certificates of Education, GCE Advanced Subsidiary Level (GCE AS Level) and GCE Advanced Level (GCE A Level).

School feedback: 'Cambridge International A Levels are the 'gold standard' qualification. They are based on rigorous, academic syllabuses that are accessible to students from a wide range of abilities yet have the capacity to stretch our most able.'

Feedback from: Director of Studies, Auckland Grammar School, New Zealand

How students, teachers and higher education can use the grades

Cambridge International A Level

Assessment at Cambridge International A Level has two purposes:

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

Cambridge International AS Level

Assessment at Cambridge International AS Level has two purposes:

- to measure learning and achievement
The assessment:
 - confirms achievement and performance in relation to the knowledge, understanding and skills specified in the syllabus.
- to show likely future success
The outcomes:
 - help predict which students are well prepared for a particular course or career and/or which students are more likely to be successful
 - help students choose the most suitable course or career
 - help decide whether students part way through a Cambridge International A Level course are making enough progress to continue
 - guide teaching and learning in the next stages of the Cambridge International A Level course.

Grade descriptions

Grade descriptions are provided to give an indication of the standards of achievement candidates awarded particular grades are likely to show. Weakness in one aspect of the examination may be balanced by a better performance in some other aspect.

Grade descriptions for Cambridge International A Level Literature in English will be published after the first assessment of the A Level in 2024. Find more information at www.cambridgeinternational.org/alevel

Changes to this syllabus for 2024, 2025 and 2026

The syllabus has been updated. This is version 1, published September 2021.

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

Changes to syllabus content

- Set texts have been updated.
 - The text editions from which examination question papers are set are specified for all set texts on pages 47–49.
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Any textbooks endorsed to support the syllabus for examination from 2021 are suitable for use with this syllabus.



School feedback: ‘While studying Cambridge IGCSE and Cambridge International A Levels, students broaden their horizons through a global perspective and develop a lasting passion for learning.’

Feedback from: Zhai Xiaoning, Deputy Principal, The High School Affiliated to Renmin University of China

We are committed to making our documents accessible in accordance with the WCAG 2.1 Standard. We're always looking to improve the accessibility of our documents. If you find any problems or you think we're 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.

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