

GCE English Literature - Network Summer 2018

If you are here with colleagues from your school, please could you split up and sit with teachers from other schools...





Course Aims

- What is Prose? – text choices and timeline activity.
- Ideas for approaching context in prose – AO3.
- Ideas for exploring writers craft in prose – AO2.
- Discussion of Paper 2 – timings and requirements.
- Networking and ideas for Autumn 2018 networks.

NB: for those of you who have downloaded this resource from our website - help points have been added to this presentation to help you work through the activities.



What is Prose?

- What do your students know about prose by the end of GCSE?
- What do you want them to know about prose by the end of A level?
- How can we help them in this transition?

Help point: questions to be discussed as a group.

Look at Handout 1 - this is a classroom resource to use when focusing on Prose

NB: useful to connect Paper 2 skills with coursework as many students chose prose texts.



Choosing Prose texts

- Do the students have any choice in the prose texts that they study?
- How much choice do you have as a teacher to follow your passions?
- How are the exam (and coursework) prose texts chosen in your centre?

Help point: questions to be discussed as a group.



Timeline Activity

- Discuss the texts that you have been given in your group and decide the order of publication, oldest to newest.

Help point: you need Resource 1a delegate copy for this activity,
A classroom resource copy has also been included with longer extracts.

- Place the prose texts on the Timeline – you will need to negotiate with other groups!

Help point: you need Resource 1b for this activity

- Using the sticky notes, could you place the texts that you are teaching/planning to teach on the timeline?

Help point: this could be done verbally as well



Order of texts

Help point: look at Resource 1c



The Literary Context

- How are these texts significant examples of the development of the novel?
- Can you identify the texts that use these styles?
 - epistolary
 - serialisation
 - classic omniscient narrator
 - stream of consciousness
 - experimental
 - multi perspective
 - limited third person/unreliable/inadequate narrator.
- How might it help our students to understand these different styles in the texts they are taught?

Help point: once you have finished this activity use Resource 1d to check your justifications against the ones provided.

Points of discussion: why does it matter where your text fits into this? Connections and context might not be immediately within five years either side of the text.

Genre context seems to be missing in many responses – how can we encourage students to think about this?



Literary Contexts and the Assessment Objectives.

AO1	In what ways does understanding of genre provide students with a metalanguage for talking about literature and literary study? In what ways can discussion of genre assist students in formulating personal responses to text and the ability effectively to convey these responses?
AO2	How far and in what ways does genre ‘shape’ meaning in the texts students are preparing? When considering language use in drama texts, for example, students might comment on the interaction between the explicitly ‘literary’ components of the stage directions compared to the spoken language of the characters. Alternatively, they might talk about the different uses writers of drama and prose fiction make of prose and verse.



Literary Contexts and the Assessment Objectives.

AO3

How do issues surrounding the contexts of production and reception affect the ways in which readers might understand different genres? How, for instance, is the novel understood differently as literary commodity in the 18th, the 19th, the 20th and the 21st centuries?

AO4

How and when is it useful for students to use genre features as a method of creating connections between texts? How might such issues of genre ‘connection’ (or disconnection) overlap with ideas of context (AO3) and the ways in which meanings are shaped in texts (AO2)?



Literary Contexts and the Assessment Objectives.

AO5

How effectively are students introduced to critical and theoretical ideas about genre forms? How and when are students encouraged to introduce such critical and theoretical debate into class as a means of extending their abilities to talk and write critically about literary texts?

Help point: the information on slides 8-10 are from document which is on our website - you can find it under course materials/teaching & learning materials/guide/genre lines - click on the link below:

https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/A%20Level/English%20Literature/2015/teaching-and-learning-materials/Genre_Lines.pdf



Addressing literary context

Compare the ways... depict characters who investigate crime.

Robert Audley's character draws on established conventions of detective fiction. Like Dickens' Inspector Bucket, he is driven by a sense of duty. Braddon portrays Audley as similarly 'compelled to think of these things' compelled by 'a hand which is stronger than my own beckons me on'. His sense that this discovery of truth is not a choice but a necessity develops, until he declares it '[m]y duty' which is 'not the less clear because it leads me step by step, carrying ruin and desolation with me, to the home I love'. Audley presents himself as moral judge, an embodiment of Victorian morality. Braddon structures this as part of his own moral development from an idle to a person of Victorian respectability, discovering himself as well as Lady Audley's crimes. His investigation is both a necessary and a brave one, confirming his status as hero. The work that 'step by step' carries him nearer to discovery also reflects the narrative drive of every detective novel, especially one serialized to intensify the sensational readers' thrills at the discovery of each stage of the investigation. Both Audley's and Bucket's quest make them binary opposites of the criminal they pursue; they seek to restore order, to identify transgression then contain it, so that the trajectory of the detective novel moves towards restoration, and closure. The final scenes of the novel underline this closure, and see him married to Clara, a father to a 'pretty baby' and who is troubled by nothing more than being summoned from smoking to 'drink tea . . . eat strawberries and cream upon the lawn'.

Help point: look at Resource 2 - this contains full response and the related task.

Handout 2 - can be used as a classroom resource to look at before looking at a text to think about genre.



Introducing context

‘The most successful candidates opened with succinct introductions, setting out their conceptual response to the question. The response considered both texts throughout and integrated a discussion of context...

Weaker responses tended to write overly long introductions with great swathes of context which bore little relevance to the question.’

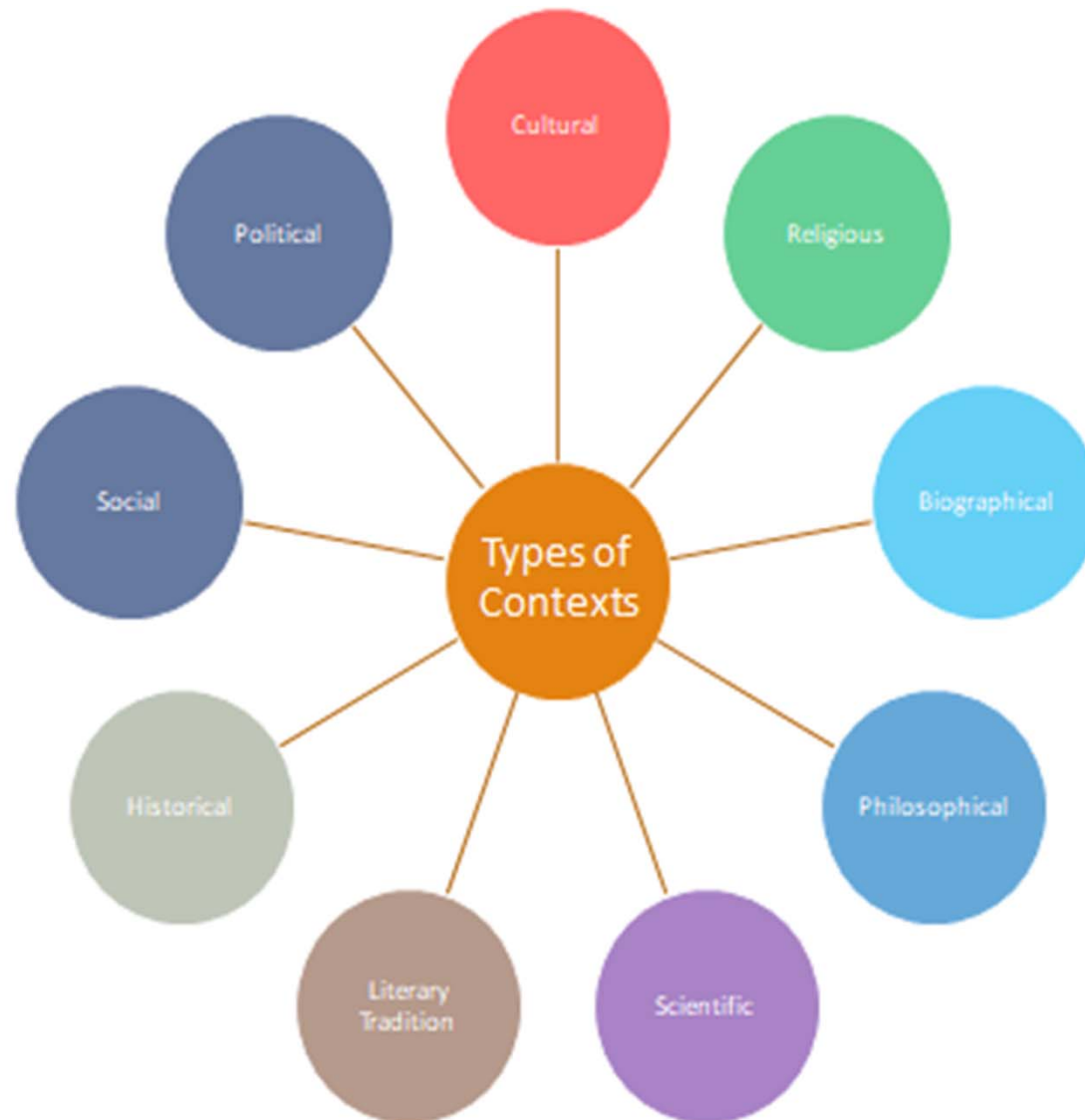
It is also worth mentioning that ‘context’ can be interpreted in a number of ways. The sociohistorical context of novels was invoked the most and was effective when it was securely grasped. Discussion of literary context appeared less frequently but could be very helpful in illuminating the techniques of an author. Biographical context (Wilde’s homosexuality, Shelley’s parents) was used by a significant number of candidates but was often a source of obfuscation or fanciful speculation.’

Examiner’s report 2017

NB: considering introductions - while it isn’t always necessary to foreground context in the introduction it can often provide a secure anchor for the thrust of the candidate’s argument in response to the question if used with precision.



Different types of context





Compare the ways in which the writers of your two chosen texts present loss. You must relate your discussion to relevant contextual factors. (1)

One very successful response to question 11 opened with a clear grasp of how AOs 3 and 4 can be integrated from the start:

‘In both ‘Tess of the D’Urbervilles’ and ‘A Thousand Splendid Suns’, the authors explore the loss of female agency and freedom in the patriarchal climate of their given contexts... Hardy achieves his purpose in portraying the “honest relations of the sexes” with his raw and direct portrayal of Tess’s loss of agency and purity amid the Victorian conventions of gender and sexuality. While Hosseini’s portrayal of Mariam and Laila’s loss of freedom and identity accurately exposes what he has described as the “gender apartheid” in 20th century Afghanistan.’ Examiners’ report 2017

NB: this introduction was highlighted as strong by the Principal Examiner for Component 2 in their report (this one does not draw on genre context and may well have done later in the essay, but is being used here for the purpose of exemplifying a succinct use of context in an introduction).



Compare the ways in which the writers of your two chosen texts present loss. You must relate your discussion to relevant contextual factors. (2)

‘In both ‘Frankenstein’ and ‘Never Let Me Go’ the idea of loss is addressed. This includes loss of life, loss of loved ones, and loss of innocence. In both of the novels, the narrators (Frankenstein and Kathy) have to deal with the loss of loved ones. However, neither of the two seem particularly affected by these losses for the most part. But, when the losses are accepted, they both show the narrators to be devastated by them. Kathy is seen as being desensitised to loss as a result of ‘the system’ perhaps affecting how Ishiguro may have felt after his experience in the system as a social worker. Furthermore Shelley lost many people during her life, which is maybe projected onto Frankenstein.’

[Example taken from current Year 12 student essay’]

Help point: see Resource 3 for the related task.



Integrating A03: Compare the ways in which the writers of your two chosen texts present madness...

Madness and loss of reason in 'Dracula' are strongly linked to notions of passion and sexual depravity – concerns particularly rife in the moral climate of the late Victorian England of 1897. Dracula's influence over the innocent Lucy is conveyed early in the novel with her desire in her 'illness' to leave her room and 'get out...pointing at the window' even her sleep, as if the draw of Dracula is uncontrollable; this suggests both mental possession and, for the reader, induces fear of the strong power of such evil. The sexually ripe descriptions of her with 'her lips [were] parted' and 'long heavy gasps' offer a shocking contrast to 'the open-hearted girl' portrayed in her initial letters. In addition, the fact that Harker, the practical journal-writer of the opening of the novel, is not immune to this madness, heightens this sense of fear. Dracula recognises 'rationality but sneers at humans' ability to 'spare with him, mocking Dr Seward: 'And so you, like the others, would play your brains against mine'. Thus Harker, positioned as a rational journal-writing man of the post-Enlightenment period, moves from a period of distress confined in the castle, to one where he claims that even the sight of Dracula's face "seemed to drive me mad'. It is not long before he appears, like Dracula himself, to be driven by inner sexual passions rather than just the external problems he is faced with, perhaps reflective of the illicit desires within mankind, a well-established trope of the Gothic novel.

This is an example high achieving paragraph from an essay comparing *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and *Dracula* on a question set by a school on madness. The subsequent paragraph addressed Oscar Wilde so this is only a small extract, but enough to show us what effective A03 looks like ie it is linked tightly with AO1 and AO2.

Helpoint: see Resource 3 for the related task.



Activity with students

A03 context

- a) Include one or more 'chunks' or paragraphs that focus almost solely on context e.g. the writer's life or historical events
- b) Omit context. (The question states 'You must relate your discussion to relevant contextual factors' so perhaps it bears no relevance)
- c) Make a literary point in relation to the question and use context to strengthen the analysis of the literary text
- d) Make unproven broad generalisations about context:
'in the nineteenth century all women were...'
'in the nineteenth century men held the power'...
- e) Make relevant points about context alongside a literary point in relation to the question

✓ or ✗ ?

This is a nice simple exercise you could do at the beginning of the course with students.



Planning and teaching the writers' craft in your novels

- What are the significant features of the prose texts you are/will be teaching?
 - Beginning/Ending
 - Narrating
 - People
 - Genre
 - Voices
 - Structure
 - Detail
 - Style
 - Devices
 - Literariness

Discuss these either as a whole group or in small groups.

After discussion look at Handout 3 - there is no need to further complicate this paper, by giving your average student extensive critical reading, but the contents page of this book provides an overview of the writers' toolkit.



Compare the ways the writers of your two chosen texts present women's experiences of love

This is a full mark exemplar from the mocks marking pack. It can be used as a teacher discussion point and also as a teaching resource - see Resource 3 for full exam response. If not, it can serve as a take home.

The full pack is on the website with the commentary - it is script 9. Find the pack on our website under Teaching and learning materials/ past training content/ Autumn 2016 Mocks Marking Pack.

"She shut the door... If all seemed useless - going on about being in love"

Here Woolf appears to deploy the symbol of the "shut door" to mirror Clarissa's own feelings which are equally suppressed. One might argue that, just as Bronte shows that Catherine cannot hope for love to consume her because social dictates disallow it, Clarissa also perceives "love" as a frivolity. In the aftermath of WWI, however, it is arguable that a similar attitude was assumed by women, perhaps the educated middle classes more than most, who might have viewed themselves comfortable



Paper 2 – Prose – Planning for the paper

- How much time spent do you spend teaching the two texts?
- How do you get an understanding of the two texts as a whole?
- When do you begin connecting the texts?
- How do you advise students to approach the exam – planning etc?

NB: also consider the weighting of the paper and how long they are spending on teaching each text and how they are teaching the texts.

Think about any other issues with Paper 2.



Component 2: Prose – Examiners' report

- Use relevant contextual material to understand a writer's concerns.
- Link the two chosen texts continuously.
- Maintain focus on the authors' concerns and methods.
- Use relevant concepts and terminology but avoid just listing literary techniques.
- Use purposeful embedded quotations to further an argument.
- Decide on a line of argument before starting the response.
- The theme chosen (The Supernatural etc) is a way of linking texts but should not always be the focus of an exam response. Pay full attention to the question rather than the theme.



Extracts from Moderator Report

9ET0 04

‘A noticeable pattern amongst many centres was a lack of consideration of how meanings are shaped (AO2) with many candidates writing about characters and events as if they were real people; such folders often made little mention of the writer by name and the techniques being used to achieve the writer’s concerns.’

‘Candidates writing about mental health (Plath, Gilman, Winterson) were often drawn some distance from the literary text into discussions about psychology and conjecturing about writers’ lives.’

NB: the point of coursework is to see how far students have come since GCSE, to allow them to demonstrate independence and for them to study a text that interests them – if the entire group are taught two texts, even if they have a choice of questions, how far does this meet the intention of the component?

The coursework guidance document offers models of different approaches
- find it on our website under the forms and administration tab/teacher support.



Extracts from Moderator Report

9ET0 04

‘A significant number of students across the ability range were drawing on online study guides along with quotation banks in a gesture towards AO5 and such comment was often credited as AO5 by centres. In many cases this seemed to replace independent and academic reading of their chosen texts. It also hindered their personal argument and engagement with AO2. Interestingly, this occurred most often with popular A level texts such as ‘The Great Gatsby’, ‘The Bloody Chamber’, and ‘The Color Purple’. A few well-chosen academic references critically considered in relation to the literary texts and personal analysis is likely to be much more powerful than the former approach.’

NB: also worth thinking about texts that facilitate great AO2 ‘craft’ and are less likely to encourage students to consider characters as real people. Unreliable narrators, structural features, staging, modernist techniques and so on.

In the Contemporary Black British Writers Resource Zadie Smith and Lemn Sissay discuss this in detail.



Upcoming events

Free Training

- Online Pre-recorded Feedback
- Autumn networks
- New to Edexcel

Paid-For Training

- Teaching AO5 in Shakespeare – Summer 2018 & Spring 2019
- Teaching Prose – Autumn 2018
- Approaches to teaching unseen and contemporary poetry – Winter 2018

Spring

- FREE coursework standardisation events



New resources

What is Linear? A high level exploration of making the most of the opportunities afforded by a 2 year linear course.

Qualification Level Exemplars

Contemporary Black British Writers Guide

Coursework Clinic Pack and Recording

Coming soon:

LGBT Reading Guide

Guide to British Asian writing

NB: please get in touch with Pearson if you use these materials going forward, as Goldsmiths would love to support teachers and students in their studies.

Also see Handout 4 for details of British Library resources.



Your Subject Advisor

Clare Haviland

Telephone: 020 7010 2183

Email: TeachingEnglish@pearson.com

Twitter: [@PearsonTeachEng](https://twitter.com/PearsonTeachEng)

You can sign up for Clare's e-updates by completing this [online form](#)

We also have a [Facebook](#) page to join and an online [community page](#).

