



GCSE English Literature 2013

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Why has the English Literature specification changed?

A: In 2012, Ofqual required all exam boards to review their specifications following its decision to “tighten” GCSEs in certain subjects, including English Literature. The aim was to ensure that students covered the whole curriculum. With English Literature, this review included making sure whole texts were studied; ensuring all Assessment Objectives were covered; and ensuring the clarity and consistency of all mark schemes.

Q: When do we start teaching the new specification?

A: The new Literature specification is for first teaching in September 2013. This is a linear course and the first assessment is summer 2015.

Q: We want to cover English Literature in one year, starting in 2013. Which specification should we follow?

A: For certification in summer 2014, the current linear 2012 specification must be followed. The revised 2013 specification will not be assessed until summer 2015.

From September 2014 onwards, the revised Literature specification can be completed in a year, as there will be assessment opportunities every summer from 2015 onwards for the lifetime of the specification.

Q: When does the current 2012 specification come to an end?

A: The final assessment of the current 2012 specification is summer 2014. There will not be a re-sit opportunity for this specification as the revised 2013 specification will be assessed from summer 2015. Any student wanting to retake English Literature after their summer 2014 results will need to follow the revised 2013 specification.

Q: What changes have been made to the Edexcel GCSE in English Literature?

A: A full explanation of the changes can be found [here](#).

Q: Are there any changes to the set texts?

A: No. We have not changed any of our set texts.

Q: Are there any changes to the assessment structure?

A: No. The assessment structure is still 75% external assessment and 25% internal assessment. The content of each unit is in line with the familiar 2012 linear specification.

Q: Is there any training available for the new specification?

A: Yes. FREE face to face Getting Ready to Teach events are being run to support the implementation of the new qualification. These can be booked [here](#).

Additionally, a Quick Start guide and an on-line presentation for use within schools will be available via the website to coincide with the Getting Ready to Teach events. Online tea time briefings will also be offered in May.

Q: Will there be any new exemplars?

A: Yes. There will be new exemplars for the Shakespeare and Contemporary Drama tasks and for the Unseen Poetry. These will be published on the Edexcel website by Easter. We will also update you through the English Forum and the Literature website when they are available. You will be able to see from the Changes Explained document that many of the current exemplars are still valid.

Q: Why are there more SPaG marks in the revised Literature unit 1?

A: The percentage of SPaG marks was set by Ofqual at 5% of the total qualification mark. The revised assessment materials have slightly more marks available and so 5% represents a small increase in the marks which have been allocated for SPaG. One additional mark has been added to unit 1 section B.

Q: Why are 15 poets provided as preparation for the unseen poetry assessment?

A: The unseen poem in the unit 2 exam will be taken from the works of one of the 15 poets listed in the specification. Students are required to study 6 texts to meet the requirements of the English curriculum. The unseen poem is one of the 6 texts. Students must study a full range of poems in preparation for the unseen. The 15 named poets provide a focus for this study of poetry and an opportunity to introduce students to a variety of contemporary and heritage poems.

Q: Who are the 15 poets?

A: The 15 poets are listed on page 10 of the specification. They are:

Maya Angelou	Thomas Hardy	Margaret Atwood
Seamus Heaney	Elizabeth Barrett Browning	Ted Hughes
Charles Causley	D H Lawrence	John Clare
Sarojini Naidu	Emily Dickinson	Edgar Allen Poe
Helen Dunmore	Siegfried Sassoon	Robert Frost

Q: Will there be any materials to support the unseen poetry assessment?

A: Yes. Edexcel are providing an Unseen Poetry Preparation Anthology, including one poem by each of the 15 poets. This anthology will be available online to support the preparation for the unseen assessment. It includes audio recordings of each poem. In addition, a new Teacher Guide, with lesson plans and worksheets will also be available via the Edexcel website. These are FREE resources and will be available after the Easter holidays. We will update you via the English Forum and the Literature website as soon as they are published.

The poems provided in the Preparation Anthology will NEVER be used in a live assessment of this qualification and so these lessons are focused on aspects of poetry, and how to approach unseen poetry.

Q: Can I continue to use the existing unseen poetry resources?

A: Yes. The new resources support the development of the skills needed for responding to unseen poetry. The unseen section of the current Teacher Guide can still be used, as can any other resources which you already have for the teaching of unseen poetry.

Q: Are there any changes to the 4 collections in the current Poetry Anthology?

A: No. The Poetry Anthology is unchanged. Order your FREE copies of the current Poetry Anthology and Anthology support materials **here**.

Q: Why do we have to select from the 9 contemporary drama texts which are provided in the specification?

A: The range of contemporary drama texts which can be studied has been reviewed to ensure that all of the available choices are comparable. Providing a list of drama texts also ensures that they are of a high standard and have sufficient literary merit for GCSE study. In choosing the final 9 texts, we surveyed the most common text choices for this unit, and the overwhelming majority of popular drama text choices are on the list.

Q: What are the 9 contemporary drama texts?

A: The texts are listed on page 13 of the specification. They are:

Whose Life is it anyway? Brian Clark

Educating Rita, Willy Russell

A View from the Bridge, Arthur Miller

Our Day Out, Willy Russell

The Crucible, Arthur Miller

Pygmalion, G B Shaw

An Inspector Calls, J B Priestley

Journey's End, R C Sherriff

Blood Brothers, Willy Russell

Q: Is there still a free choice of Shakespeare play?

A: Yes.

Q: When can we complete the controlled assessment tasks?

A: You can complete the controlled assessment tasks at any point during the course. As this is a linear qualification, the tasks and marks can only be submitted at the end of the course, when the candidates are certificating. It is important to ensure that the tasks are valid for the year of submission. For example, if you are submitting on 15th May 2015, the tasks valid from June 2014 – May 2015 must be used, even if the task is taken outside of this range of dates.

Q: How can I make sure that I am kept up to date with any new materials?

A: You can receive e-mail updates by e-mailing 'sign me up' to **teachingenglish@pearson.com**. You can check the **English forum** and follow Clare Haviland, the English Subject Advisor on **Twitter**.