

# **International GCSE English**

## **Coursework title guidance**

**English Language A: pages 2-6**

**English Literature: pages 7- 11**

## International GCSE English Language A Paper 3: Coursework Support for Teachers

The Specification clearly states the requirements but they are listed here for ease of reference:

*'Students will be required to write TWO coursework assignments, which may be self-generated or devised by their teachers.'*

- The first assignment is assessed for **Reading: Assignment A: Poetry and Prose Texts**
- The second assignment is assessed for **Writing: Assignment B: Imaginative Writing**.

The guidance below offers advice on each of these.

### READING

#### Assignment A: Poetry and Prose Texts

A piece of writing responding to any **two** poetry or prose texts from Part 2 of the Pearson Edexcel International GCSE English Anthology.

#### Assessment Objectives: Reading

This assignment will be assessed on the following objectives:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• AO1 read and understand a variety of texts, selecting and interpreting information, ideas and perspectives <b>(12 marks)</b></li><li>• AO2 understand and analyse how writers use linguistic and structural devices to achieve their effects. <b>(18 marks)</b></li></ul> |
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The assignment will be in two parts:

- **Part 1** will be a response to the set assignment and is out of **24 marks**, with 6 marks for AO1 and 18 marks for AO2.
- **Part 2** will be a short commentary explaining why the student chose the texts discussed in the assignment, and is marked out of **6 marks** for AO1.

There is therefore a total of **30 marks** for this assignment.

Further guidance on how to write the commentary is available on the website in 'Paper 3 Coursework: Commentary Writing Support Pearson Edexcel International GCSE in English Language (Specification A) (4EA1)'.

### Word limit

The word limit (650-800 words) for the essay is only a guide and there are no penalties for exceeding the limit.

## Presenting the assignment

The assignment may be handwritten or word-processed.

## Choice of Reading assignment titles

The selection of suitable titles is of paramount importance if students are to be able to access both assessment objectives. For example, the use of the word 'explore' in a question would lead to thorough analysis. Students may respond to self-devised coursework assignments or to those which are devised by the teacher. All students in a centre do not have to do the same assignment. There is no requirement for students in a centre to write on different texts, but it is often advantageous for centres to choose a variety of titles as this can enable students to complete assignments which suit their strengths.

Make sure that the titles include such words as 'Discuss', 'Explore', 'Consider', 'Analyse', 'How far ...', 'To what extent...', 'In what ways...', 'How...'. This will enable students to show understanding, selection, interpretation, ideas and perspectives, but also to analyse the language and structure.

## The commentary

The short commentary of 200-300 words is a change from the present specification: it should give the candidates a chance to explain their choices and this is a most interesting addition.

## Possible titles for the Reading assignment

Assignments may have titles of various kinds, such as the following:

- Discuss how the authors use language to present the characters in *The Story of an Hour* and *The Bright Lights of Sarajevo*.
- Consider any two texts about children. How are they similar? How do they differ?
- Pick any two poems. How do they use language to reflect the idea of a turning-point?

The following section gives some guidance on setting titles and further suggestions.

- **Explore how contrast is used in 'Disabled' and 'Out, Out - '**

These poems illustrate different forms of contrast: before and after the catastrophic happening, the stillness, the loss of youth, the waste, contrasts of colour, life and death (or near-death). Students should be able to cover a wide variety of points to show how the language is used to heighten the sense of loss and how the structure of the poems

emphasises the drama or poignancy. Make sure that they plan carefully, making clear critical statements, offering brief, relevant quotations and drawing conclusions.

- **Discuss the presentation of women in 'The Necklace' and 'Still I Rise'.**

This is an interesting topic as the Madame Loisel and Maya Angelou have different ideas and perspectives. The students have the opportunity to analyse the central characters' positions in life, their attitudes to their present lot and their struggles, but they may also consider how the women face adversity. 'The Necklace' also offers the chance to compare Madame Loisel with her friend Madame Forestier. A further consideration may be the differences between the use of language in a poem and in a short story.

- **To what extent do writers use unexpected endings? Choose two texts from Part 2 of the Anthology and analyse how the writers use language to achieve their effects.**

With this title the teacher could introduce a variety of texts, enabling the students to choose which two they wish to explore in detail. It is also possible to compare the effect achieved in two poems, or in two pieces of prose, or in a poem and a piece of prose.

Texts which might be considered are: 'Out, Out - ', 'The Story of an Hour', 'The Necklace', 'The Night'.

Ask the students to consider:

- Why or how is the ending of each unexpected?
- Have there been any clues which might have been missed?
- What type of language/dialogue/contrast can be found?
- What is the effect on the reader?

With all of these, it is possible to offer advice at the drafting stage, to ensure that there is a logical argument, that all points are supported, that the assessment objectives are met and that a personal viewpoint is explored.

## **WRITING**

### **Assignment B: Imaginative writing**

#### **The nature of the assignment:**

A piece of personal or imaginative writing based on a selected topic. Its purpose should therefore be to explore, imagine or entertain.

**Assessment Objectives: Writing**

- AO4 communicate effectively and imaginatively, adapting form, tone and register of writing for specific purposes and audiences **(18 marks)**
- AO5 write clearly, using a range of vocabulary and sentence structures, with appropriate paragraphing and accurate spelling, grammar and punctuation **(12 marks)**

There is a total of **30 marks** for this assignment.

**Word limit**

The word limit (650-800 words) for the essay is only a guide and there are no penalties for exceeding the limit.

**Presenting the assignment**

The assignment may be handwritten or word-processed.

**Choice of Writing assignment titles**

As with Assignment A, it is most important to choose a task which enables students to address both assessment objectives, in this case AO4 and AO5. Some variety of task is desirable to cover the range of personal interests and skills of the students from the centre. Moderators have commented that where candidates have some element of choice about their writing task, there is a higher quality of response.

The topic could be

- suggested by a piece in the Anthology, or
- an unrelated topic, perhaps relating to an image or set of images, a title for a short story or a line which may start or end a piece of imaginative writing.

Teachers may well feel it is advisable to steer students away from stories which become far-fetched or from predictable endings ('I woke up. It was all a dream'). Drawing on personal experience or keeping closer to reality could be a more successful approach. The structure and vocabulary should be carefully planned to make the piece cohesive and memorable. The most important thing to do at the completion of the assignment is to allow time for proof-reading, to ensure that any errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar are eliminated, as far as possible.

**Possible titles for the Writing assignment**

The following section gives some guidance on setting titles and further suggestions.

- A title which draws directly from the anthology could be: ***"I've left Auror and that leaving of my home was hard and bitter, but my time is coming."*** After reading 'Significant Cigarettes' write what you imagine might be the next episode in Lev's story.

There are many ways that the Anthology poems or prose can be a starting-point for a creative piece of writing. This task can show an understanding of how to continue the ideas, situation, responses and character of the given source. It can also be a good way of showing that the student can adapt form, tone and register. Ask the student whether it is an idea to concentrate on a further reaction to the journey, or whether it will work best if it draws on how Lev will react when he arrives in England.

Students may consider such questions as the following:

- What are his hopes and dreams and how they are realised?
  - Does England offer the opportunities he needs?
  - Does he find things alien or strange?
  - Does he meet someone who can help?
- **The picture**

Write your own imaginative or descriptive piece with this title. This can be a picture or a photograph which forms the central point of a story and/or description. It allows the student to draw on the imagination or on real memories and it can be a useful suggestion for working on interesting vocabulary, sensory description and colour.

- **Write a story on the theme of meeting a challenge**

This could be inspired by one of the Anthology sources but it could also arise from personal experience or from a dramatic situation. As with the other suggested titles, planning is essential to maintain a focus on the challenge, rather than losing track by writing too much on the build-up to the challenge.

Whatever title is chosen, ensure that the students have planned a beginning, a middle and an end: concluding sections may often be rushed or anti-climactic. Dialogue should be punctuated carefully and should not be too long. Ask them to check that words are not wasted on immaterial direct speech. A moderator will read many assignments. What makes this piece special or arresting?

## International GCSE English Literature Paper 3: Coursework Support for Teachers

It is important to bear in mind that Paper 3 (Coursework) is an alternative to Paper 2, which is undertaken under examination conditions at the end of the course. For this reason, Paper 3 mirrors the Paper 2 requirements: there are TWO essays, one on Modern Drama (Assignment A) and one on a Literary Heritage text (Assignment B). They may be self-generated or devised by the teacher. Students may be involved in choosing which texts to write about and the devising of the task, although there is no requirement for students in a centre to write on different texts. Teachers may teach one of the texts for an assignment in class, with students writing on an essay title on the studied text, or they may focus on one of a variety of titles based on the text which has been taught. A selection of titles will enable students to work to their strengths – for example, character, relationships or theme. Teaching should focus on the study of whole texts, developing students' comprehension, as well as their ability to produce clear and coherent writing using accurate Standard English. Wider reading of literary texts is also encouraged to help students develop their skills and critical reading skills.

### Assignment A: Modern Drama

The assignment must allow students to access AO1 and AO2.

#### Assessment Objectives for Modern Drama:

- AO1 demonstrate a close knowledge and understanding of texts, maintaining a critical style and presenting an informed personal engagement **(15 marks)**
- AO2 analyse the language, form and structure used by a writer to create meanings and effects **(15 marks)**

There is a total of **30 marks**, with 15 marks for AO1 and 15 marks for AO2.

#### Word limit

The word limit (650-800 words) for the essay is only a guide and there are no penalties for exceeding the limit.

#### Presenting the assignment

The assignment may be handwritten or word-processed.

#### Choice of Modern Drama assignment titles

The selection of suitable titles is of paramount importance if students are to be able to access both assessment objectives.

Make sure that the titles include such words as 'Discuss', 'Explore', 'Analyse', 'How far ...', 'To what extent...', 'In what ways...', 'How...'. This will enable students to show a close understanding of the text in a critical style whilst analysing the language, form and structure. It is recommended that centres focus their questions on one main area/theme/character – avoid questions where there are two themes. For example, rather than 'love and friendship' select just one area such as 'friendship'. This will provide students with more opportunity to focus on the question.

### **Possible titles for Modern Drama**

Assignments may have titles of various kinds, such as the following:

- **Explore the significance of the Inspector in *An Inspector Calls*. You must consider language, form and structure.**

There is much that students can consider in this topic. Ask them to make notes under different headings to explore the different facets of the Inspector's character and role. How does he gradually cross-examine the Birlings and Gerald? How does he represent the central theme?

- **How does Miller explore community in *A View from the Bridge*? You must consider language, form and structure.**

The community of Red Hook is particularly tightly-knit. Ask the students to consider the nature of this society, and its codes and attitudes. What upsets the balance within the community?

- **How does the writer present the character of Christopher in *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time*? You must consider language, form and structure.**

The play explores the way in which the Aspergers-affected Christopher unravels the detective story.

Students may be invited to consider a number of key questions, for example:

- What does he do and how does he act?
- What do we learn about his relationships and how he expands his horizons?
- Is the way in which the play is structured important to how his character is revealed and developed?



With all of these, it is possible to offer advice at the drafting stage, to ensure that there is a logical argument, that all points are supported, that the assessment objectives are met and that a personal viewpoint is explored.

## Assignment B: Literary Heritage Texts

### Assessment Objectives for Literary Heritage Texts

- AO1 demonstrate a close knowledge and understanding of texts, maintaining a critical style and presenting an informed personal engagement **(10 marks)**
- AO2 analyse the language, form and structure used by a writer to create meanings and effects **(10 marks)**
- AO4 show understanding of the relationships between texts and the contexts in which they were written **(10 marks)**

There is a total of **30 marks**, with 10 marks for each of AO1, AO2 and AO4. Teaching should focus on the study of whole texts, developing students' comprehension and critical reading, as well as their ability to produce clear and coherent writing using accurate Standard English. To help students develop their skills, wider reading of literary texts is also encouraged.

### Word limit

The word limit (650-800 words) for the essay is only a guide and there are no penalties for exceeding the limit.

### Presenting the assignment

The assignment may be handwritten or word-processed.

### Guidance on context (AO4)

The added consideration for the Literary Heritage assignment is the understanding of the relationship between a text and its context (AO4).

In their lessons, teachers should include reference to:

- the author's own life and individual situation, including the place and time of writing, only
- where these relate to the text
- the historical setting, time and location of the text
- social and cultural contexts (for example, attitudes in society; expectations of different
- cultural groups)
- the literary context of the text, for example, literary movements or genres
- the way in which texts are received and engaged with by different audiences, at different

- times (for example, how a text may be read differently in the 21st century from when it
- was written).

Most importantly, context should not be considered in isolation:

- relate all context points to the text: it is not sufficient to add a 'bolt-on' paragraph at the start of the answer.
- place all examples firmly in the text.
- it is a literary essay and not a 'History' essay.
- look for 3 or 4 points which can be evidenced from the Literary Heritage text.

Evidence, quotations and links are vital:

- All points should be backed up by short, apposite quotations.
- Encourage students to integrate or embed examples into their own critical comments, never to quote long sections. Key words and phrases are what is needed.

### Possible titles for Literary Heritage texts

The selection of suitable titles is of paramount importance if students are to be able to access both assessment objectives.

Assignments may have titles of various kinds, such as the following:

- **How does Austen present the character of Charlotte Lucas in *Pride and Prejudice*?**

**You must consider language, form and structure and refer to the context of the novel.**

The character of Charlotte is developed through her relationship with Lizzie and Mr Collins. What part of society does she represent?  
How does this govern what she decides to do?

- **Explore the importance of wealth in *Great Expectations*.**  
**You must consider language, form and structure and refer to the context of the novel.**

There are strong contrasts within the novel regarding poverty and wealth. Ask students to consider examples of wealth.  
How do people handle wealth?  
What is Dickens trying to show about attitudes to wealth and what is ultimately important?

- **Analyse how Shakespeare presents kingship in *Macbeth*.  
You must consider language, form and structure and refer to the context of the play.**

Examples of kingship are contrasted within the play.

How is Macbeth compared with Duncan?

What other comments are there within the play on kingship and what are the significance of them?

With all of these, it is possible to offer advice at the drafting stage, to ensure that there is a logical argument, that all points are supported, that the assessment objectives are met and that a personal viewpoint is explored.