

Scheme of work – Cambridge IGCSE® Literature (English) (0486)

Unit 2: Prose

Recommended prior knowledge

Students should have experience of reading novels and short stories in their pre-Cambridge IGCSE studies.

Context

This unit relates to the teaching of Prose texts, and can be read alongside the units on Drama and Poetry texts. No particular order is specified. All students must study a Prose text for either Paper 1 (Open Books) or Paper 4 (Closed Books). In addition, depending on their route through the syllabus, students may respond to writing in prose in one of the following:

- Coursework (Paper 2)
- Unseen (Paper 3)
- Set Texts (Paper 5)

Separate units are provided on both Coursework and the Unseen paper.

Teachers will note the overlap between some of the activities suggested here and in the Drama unit. However, significant differences can be observed too.

Outline

The unit guides teachers through the process of students' responding to prose texts, from an initial reading through to informed personal responses in writing. It should be noted that the syllabus's assessment objectives are assessed holistically, and not discretely. The assessment objectives are:

AO1: Show detailed knowledge of the content of literary texts in the three main forms (Drama, Poetry and Prose)

AO2: Understand the meanings of literary texts and their contexts, and explore texts beyond surface meanings to show deeper awareness of ideas and attitudes

AO3: Recognise and appreciate ways in which writers use language, structure and form to create and shape meanings and effects

AO4: Communicate a sensitive and informed personal response to literary texts.

The learning objectives can be addressed right from the first reading of the text, though more explicitly during Reading and Writing activities designed to develop a detailed knowledge of, and informed personal response to, the text and the writer's use of language, structure and form.

AO	Learning objectives	Suggested teaching activities	Learning resources
1– 4	a. enjoy reading prose fiction b. appreciate narrative viewpoint, including particular characteristics	1. A first reading Teachers are likely to match the choice of text to the aptitudes and	Syllabus - Set texts list

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	<p>of first and third person narrators</p> <p>c. appreciate the writer’s use of structure, including foreshadowing and parallelism in the plotting</p> <p>d. empathise with characters, appreciating what motivates them</p> <p>e. explore developments character and the way they are portrayed as the novel or story progresses</p> <p>f. explore ways in which relationships between characters are presented</p> <p>g. explore how dialogue is used to present and differentiate characters</p> <p>h. appreciate the interplay of dialogue, description and plot development</p> <p>i. explore the novel’s or story’s thematic concerns</p> <p>j. appreciate expression of ideas</p> <p>k. engage with the twists and turning-points of narratives and appreciate the build-up of suspense and creation of tension</p> <p>l. respond to mood and changes of mood, including comedy, tragedy, irony, pathos</p> <p>m. analyse the ‘writer at work’: the way s/he uses language to create particular effects, e.g. diction, irony, recurrent imagery, symbolism</p> <p>n. appreciate the context of significant episodes within the overall text</p> <p>o. be aware of the historical, social and cultural contexts as illuminated by the text</p>	<p>interests of their groups. For some groups, it might be possible to ask the students to read the text over a holiday prior to class work on the text.</p> <p>For other groups, teachers will need to provide more explicit direction: e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ reading aloud the opening chapter(s) ▪ reading dialogue between characters in role, as if it were a play ▪ hot-seating characters ▪ discussing how a particular scene might be filmed or staged ▪ (where a video is available) watching an extract of the scene and comparing the film with the original prose text <p>Whatever the approach taken to students’ first reading, they should be encouraged to keep a reading log, which might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ brief synopses of chapters (in no more than a couple of sentences in their own words) ▪ a time-line of events (very useful when a narrative is arranged non-chronologically) ▪ a list or diagram of characters and their relationships with each other ▪ first impressions of main characters ▪ initial thoughts about the main themes or ideas in the text <p>Students could devise short answer questions to test each other’s knowledge and understanding of plot development and characterisation while tracking the text’s narrative.</p> <p>Study guides (in print or online) can enhance students’ understanding at this early stage, as they often provide useful synopses of the plot and details about characters and main themes. Such guides will be less useful during the later stages of study, as the emphasis will be primarily on eliciting students’ informed personal responses.</p> <p>Teaching might usefully include an activity that enables students to distinguish between good and bad websites. The latter are distinguished by the dominance of advertising or the provision of ‘ready-made’ or even ‘tailor-made’ essays. Frequent reminders should be given about the penalties of plagiarism, or in exam jargon ‘suspected malpractice’.</p>	<p>Study guides for the chosen set text – in print or online</p> <p>A particularly good resource for pre-1900 texts is www.victorianweb.org/</p> <p>For more recent texts from different cultures www.postcolonialweb.org/ is very useful.</p>

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	<p>p. communicate in extended writing informed personal responses to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ passage-based questions ▪ discursive essay questions ▪ empathic tasks ▪ questions on unseen prose extracts 		
		<p>2. Teacher preparation</p> <p>Before exploring the text in detail with students, teachers' preparation might usefully include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ reviewing past papers for questions on their chosen text (where available) and questions on similar prose texts ▪ devising a list of Cambridge IGCSE-style general essay and empathic questions for use at various stages of the course (including for mock examinations). <p>The length of some novels makes it impossible to cover in lesson time each page with the same thoroughness one would have for the study of, say, a poem. It is not always practical (and some would add, desirable) to study texts exhaustively. Useful practice at this stage is to select a number (perhaps between 8 and 12) of extracts from the novel. These extracts should be drawn from significant moments in the novel in respect of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ plot development ▪ character development and interaction ▪ the treatment of themes ▪ structure (e.g. openings and endings of chapters) <p>These extracts will be useful for activities on passage-based questions, and the preparation outlined here will help to provide a clear focus for teaching and learning. It leads to a more effective study of the text than, say, reading the book from the first page to the last without considering the types of question students will face in the examinations and coursework units until later in the course.</p> <p>For teachers choosing the anthology of short stories, <i>Stories of Ourselves</i>, suitable essay and empathic questions should be devised for</p>	<p>Past questions for 0486 – on Teacher Support website</p> <p>Teacher's own list of practice questions</p> <p>Set Prose text</p> <p><i>Stories of Ourselves</i></p>

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		<p>each of the ten stories, perhaps one general essay and one empathic question for each story.</p> <p>The list of questions produced will form the basis of spoken as well as written work throughout the course.</p>	
		<p>3. Passage-based questions</p> <p>The purpose of these questions is to enable students to show their detailed appreciation of the writing. It is useful to look at the wording of passage-based questions in recent past papers, as teachers can apply similar wording to the passages they have chosen for close study. Questions often use words such as the following, designed to elicit personal responses to the writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ memorable ▪ vivid ▪ moving ▪ dramatic ▪ tense ▪ striking ▪ amusing ▪ ironic <p>There are two types of passage-based question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ those which have an almost exclusive focus on the extract (e.g. <i>How does Bronte convey the strength of Jane's feelings here?</i>) ▪ those which have a primary focus on the extract but which also invite consideration of elsewhere in the novel (e.g. <i>How does [the writer] make this such a powerful moment in the novel?</i>) <p>Activities should enable students to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ chart where the extract appears in the wider context of the novel (or short story). In order to test students' knowledge of the text, it would be useful to ask what happens immediately before and after the extract. If the passage has been selected for its interest in the way a particular character has been depicted, then it would be useful to compare the depiction of character here with elsewhere in the novel. Class discussion could focus on students' awareness of 	<p>Set text</p> <p>Copies of key extracts</p> <p>Teacher-devised questions</p> <p><i>Cambridge IGCSE Literature in English</i> – Unit 4 on Responding to prose texts</p>

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		<p>the significance of the extract within the text as a whole.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ provide a brief overview of the content of the extract. Oral questioning can help to ascertain how much of the detail of the extract has been grasped. Useful ways of getting students to appreciate the detail and also the texture of the writing include having students read out lines of dialogue as if it were a play and using the extract as the basis for improvised drama work. ▪ explore the detail of the choice of language and its effects. A disciplined approach to the analysis of language needs to be taken from the start. Students could highlight on a copy of the extract the words and phrases they find particularly vivid or striking. Then, working in pairs, the students have to explain why they find them vivid or striking. Next, the teacher invites feedback from the class, and identifies which explanations are suitably analytical. The key focus must be on the precise effects created by the writer's use of particular words and phrases. Before proceeding to extended essay responses, students should have opportunities to practise their analytical writing in short responses (e.g. a couple of paragraphs) to three or four words/phrases. As part of their planning, students should be encouraged to draw up lists of Quotations and Comments. The comments should be longer than the quotations. Students should be encouraged to quote only those words necessary to make their point. ▪ explore the way the passage is organised. Students should be encouraged to consider the structure of the extract: how it begins, develops and ends. They could use their copy of the extract to indicate the various sections of the passage. It is useful to indicate how much of the extract is comprised of dialogue, description or development of the plot. This will enable them to consider the writer's use of form as well as structure. The effect of the passage as a whole on the reader should also be considered. ▪ explore the way the narrative is told and the effects created. Students sometimes find this a difficult area, but it is an important aspect of studying prose texts. The key question is 'Who is telling the story?' Small group discussions can be useful in brainstorming 	

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		<p>ideas. Get them to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ who the narrator is ▪ whether the narrative is told from first or third person viewpoint ▪ what information the narrator provides (or withholds) within this particular extract ▪ the reliability of the narrator and his/her views. <p>For example, in studying <i>Wuthering Heights</i>, the different narratives of Lockwood and Nelly Dean are worth exploring: how does Lockwood respond to Nelly's story-telling, and does the student respond in the same way?</p> <p>Film and audio resources</p> <p>Students' personal responses can be informed by the ways in which others have represented characters and themes in film and sound recordings. Where such resources exist and are accessible (e.g. video clips on the internet), teachers could ask students to compare their own response to the original texts with the interpretations found in film/audio versions.</p> <p>Students' written responses</p> <p>Students should have regular opportunities to practise responding in writing to passage-based questions. The earlier exercises will require a degree of scaffolding: the question stem could, for example, be followed by bullet points offering prompts which ensure they cover important areas of enquiry. The level of scaffolding can be gradually reduced as students become better versed at 'interrogating' extracts for themselves. Activities might focus on the selection of relevant, as opposed to, peripheral detail found in the extracts.</p> <p>Annotation of the extract will always be helpful to students in identifying those aspects of the writing they will analyse in their answers. From 2012 all Set Texts papers will print the specified extract, and students should be encouraged to spend about five minutes reading and annotating the passage before answering the question. This will remind them of the importance of using brief and apposite quotations in their essays. Students aiming for Band 2 should be reminded that it requires,</p>	<p>DVD/audio versions of the text (where they exist)</p> <p>Video clips from the internet</p>

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		<p>among other things, ‘much well-selected reference’.</p> <p>Later in the course, it would be beneficial for students to mark their own and others’ responses to passage-based questions. This is an excellent way of students taking responsibility for their own (and each other’s) learning. For this, students will need to have a copy of the assessment criteria or, in the interests of differentiation, a modified version expressed in more student-friendly terms. This will help them to judge responses in a more objective way.</p> <p>Link with the Unseen paper There are clear and obvious links with the Prose section of the Unseen paper. Both the Unseen Prose and passage-based prose questions require sustained close analysis of the prose writer at work. In both cases, students need to provide many references to the passage as an integral part of their analysis.</p> <p>Note on the use of literary terms Far more important than the ability to use literary terms is the ability to probe the effects created by a writer’s use of language. Analysis is required, not the mere identification of literary devices.</p> <p>Of course, students will pick up the more useful terms such as <i>metaphor</i> and <i>irony</i> as they study a range of texts over the course. Helpful words relating to prose texts are <i>chapter, novel, narrator, viewpoint</i> and <i>character</i>. The key thing to remember is the quality of the analysis, i.e. the comments on effects. There are no marks for employing the more exotic literary terms.</p>	<p>Students’ own writing</p> <p>Assessment criteria – supplied in all copies of mark schemes</p> <p>Unseen paper unit of scheme of work</p>
		<p>4. Empathic tasks</p> <p>Empathic writing provides links to creative writing and drama-based activities. It involves transformative writing which helps students to provide an authentic voice for characters and expression of ideas.</p> <p>Initial creative responses to characters</p> <p>Regular hot-seating activities can provide immediate feedback to teachers about how well the students know their text and their chosen</p>	

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		<p>character's role in it. Hot-seating is really the speaking equivalent of written empathic tasks. Both require students to get into the skin of a character at a specified moment in the text. Hot-seating is useful as a preliminary activity, as it provides the opportunity to interrogate the mind-set and motives of a character. Prior to the speaking activity, it is helpful to provide some time for students to write down initial ideas that can then be built on or challenged in the hot-seating itself.</p> <p>Whilst more general role-play and other drama-focused activities can also lead to an enhanced understanding of character, it is important that the following is recognised. Empathic responses must be rooted in the imagined world of the play; questions never invite Language-style explorations which go beyond the recognisable world of the text.</p> <p>Film versions of plays or novels can enhance an understanding of character. Students will need to be aware of any differences between the film version and original text.</p> <p>Early written exercises: developing a suitable writing style</p> <p>Hot-seating work leads naturally to written work. Early exercises should perhaps require a couple of paragraphs only, aiming above all else to capture an authentic voice for a particular character and moment in the story.</p> <p>Students can work in small groups. Each student reads out their response, and others note down strengths, but also weaknesses such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ factual inaccuracies ▪ confusion about the moment prescribed in the question ▪ false notes created by words or expression the character would not use <p>Framing students' empathic tasks for Coursework</p> <p>For Coursework assignments, it is advisable to let students select the character whose voice they wish to capture and also the particular moment in the text. This encourages independence as well as creativity.</p>	

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		<p>Students might be encouraged to submit a proposal which sets out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the character ▪ the moment ▪ a few bullet points indicating key thoughts for the character at this moment. <p>This would allow teachers to gauge whether the proposal is viable and enable them to advise students accordingly.</p> <p>Past papers provide excellent examples of empathic tasks to help teachers gauge the appropriateness of their students' proposals.</p>	
		<p>5. General essay questions</p> <p>Work on the carefully-chosen extracts from the prose text will cover a good deal of important territory – such as plot development, characterisation, themes, writer's use of language, structure and form.</p> <p>Activities should be designed to increase their knowledge and understanding of the text, in particular, how the writer presents characters, themes and setting.</p> <p>Activities could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ drawing mind maps indicating a character's actions, key dialogue and what other characters say about them ▪ drama-focused activities such as the hot-seating of key characters at key moments in the novel or story ▪ exploring the interpretations of character in key clips from films and how they compare with students' own impressions ▪ compiling QUOTATIONS and COMMENTS tables for the main characters. The QUOTATIONS column would include concise, pertinent quotations. The COMMENTS column would include longer analyses of the key words in the quotations, including commentary on their effects. This will enable students to collate material, which will be useful for later written work and revision for the examination. Tables such as these can be amended, or added to, at later stages of the course and will help students to develop and fine-tune their own informed personal responses. ▪ drawing mind maps for the main themes. The theme should be in 	<p>Set text</p> <p>DVD/ video clips</p>

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		<p>the centre of the map (e.g. CIVILISATION in <i>Lord of the Flies</i>) and the branches out should relate to key incidents in the text, the ways characters represent different aspects of the theme, recurrent imagery, symbolism, and so on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ compiling list of quotations for particular settings, with comments on their significance within the overall text <p>Students' written responses</p> <p>They should have regular opportunities to practise the type of critical writing required in general essays. The requirement to write analytically is the same as for passage-based questions. The key difference is that, in general essays, the students are themselves responsible for selecting relevant points or moments in the text and the textual evidence to support them. By thinking about specific moments in the text, students are encouraged to consider the role of form and structure in creating and shaping meanings. They will have 45 minutes for all questions in the set texts papers, and they should be aware that the <i>selection</i> of relevant detail is essential. They cannot be exhaustive in 45 minutes. This should reassure them.</p> <p>Students should experience the widest possible range of general questions in the time available. As with the passage-based questions, teachers are advised to devise their own questions based on their reading of past questions on their chosen text or questions on similar texts. On character questions, for example, they should practise questions which ask for some judgement to be made on a particular character. Questions sometimes ask to what extent it is possible to admire or sympathise with a character. Occasionally questions will offer, in the form of prompts, opposite verdicts on a particular character (e.g. 'Selfish' v. 'selfless') before asking for a student's own response. Other questions ask how the writer memorably (or strikingly, or vividly, etc.) conveys a specific aspect of the character. Students should tackle all these types of question, which lend themselves to speaking as well as writing activities; not all questions should lead to a full essay response.</p> <p>All the questions set require an informed personal response to a particular slant. Rehearsed character sketches would not, therefore,</p>	<p>Past questions for 0486 – on Teacher Support website</p>

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		<p>receive high reward. The greater the practice and variety of tasks, the more students are equipped to ‘think on their feet’ in the examination.</p> <p>Another type of question allows the student much flexibility in determining the territory of their answers. Students might be asked to select one or two key moments from the text, and explore what makes them so memorable, amusing, powerful or disturbing etc. Teachers could use speaking activities to prepare for this type of question. Students might be asked individually to select a suitable ‘moment’ and write down the reasons they find their chosen moment so memorable (or amusing, powerful, disturbing etc.), remembering to focus on the writing. The speaking activity would involve the students justifying their choice with detail from the text. Useful discussion could take place on what constitutes a ‘moment’, as students must have enough to say if they are to sustain the level of response required for high reward.</p> <p>As with passage-based questions, teachers will need to provide greater scaffolding during the early work on general questions and progressively reduce the level of teacher input over the course. Activities should focus on effective planning: five minutes might be spent on each question highlighting the key words of the question and writing a plan (e.g. bullets or mind map). Without such a plan, students’ writing can become formless, as the points appear random and unconnected. Students should have the opportunity to see others’ planning. Some students write over-elaborate plans, to the detriment of their actual essays. Time spent teaching planning can promote good practice and root out bad.</p> <p>Activities that focus on students’ own work should show how brief, apposite quotations can be integrated smoothly into the flow of the students’ writing.</p> <p>Opportunities for self- and peer evaluation of general essays, using the generic mark grid, can be helpfully scheduled towards the later stages of the course. Peer-evaluation activities are best done in pairs, with students given a concise checklist of things to look for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ irrelevant points (which perhaps narrate or describe) ▪ repeated points (which do not earn any credit) ▪ unsupported assertions (which is not the same as analysis) ▪ long quotations (which indicate a lack of clear focus) 	<p>Students’ own essays</p> <p>Assessment criteria – from mark schemes</p>

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		<p>More positively, students should be encouraged to tick points which are thoughtful and quotations which are concise and relevant.</p> <p>Links with language In constructing coherent arguments, students should be reminded of the usefulness of effective planning. Careful thought should be given to paragraphing and employing a range of appropriate connectives which aid cohesion. Students should be encouraged to develop a style and vocabulary appropriate to the audience for a critical essay. This will help them to consolidate skills useful for all discursive and argumentative writing.</p> <p>Whilst marks are not deducted for inaccurate punctuation and spelling, students should be expected to proof-read their work carefully, not least as practice for their Language examination and post-Cambridge IGCSE study and employment.</p> <p>Activities could include pair work focusing on proof-reading essays for clarity and accuracy.</p>	