

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

Unit 3: Poetry

Recommended prior knowledge

Students should have experience of reading poems in their pre-Cambridge IGCSE studies.

Context

This unit relates to the teaching of Poetry, and can be read alongside the units on Drama and Prose texts. No particular order is specified. All students must study a Poetry 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 Poetry 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.

Outline

This 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 poetry as a vehicle for: ▪ description ▪ narrative ▪ personal reflection ▪ expression of emotion ▪ exploration of ideas	1. The first reading of a poem Teachers need to prepare poems in such a way as to develop their students' confidence in uncovering meanings in poetry. Students can be too readily put off by archaic or unfamiliar words or by difficulties created by contexts unfamiliar to them.	<i>Syllabus</i> - Set texts list <i>Songs of Ourselves</i> – for use as a set text and/or as an additional

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	▪ a mixture of the above b. savour the sounds of poems and enjoy reading poems aloud c. appreciate their contribution to poetic effect: ▪ rhythm ▪ rhyme ▪ assonance ▪ alliteration ▪ onomatopoeia ▪ enjambment d. explore the use of diction: e.g. the connotations of words, appeal to the senses e. appreciate imagery and its contribution to poetic effect: ▪ similes ▪ metaphors ▪ personification f. respond to tone and changes of tone g. explore the contribution of a poem's structure to its overall effect h. explore different layers of meaning i. appreciate ambiguity and ambivalence in poetry j. understand that there are alternative interpretations k. build confidence in producing informed personal responses to the poems they read, giving brief textual support and precise analytical comment on poetic effect l. be aware of the historical, social and cultural contexts as illuminated by the text m. communicate in extended writing informed personal responses to set text poems and unseen poems	The more difficult words, concepts or contexts need to be glossed and explained so that students can negotiate these particular hurdles. If they are studying the <i>Songs of Ourselves</i> selection of poems, this work is largely done for teachers in the <i>Notes for Teachers on Poetry Anthology</i>, which can be found on the Cambridge website. The purpose of these <i>Notes</i> is to assist a first reading of the poems. With some of the poems, it is still worthwhile to expect students to consult the meanings of some of the words in dictionaries (either in print or online) and perhaps to research some contexts. This will enable them to see how their own active learning can increase their understanding of a poem and help to build their confidence. Students should hear poems read aloud, in order that they can appreciate the sounds as well as the words, images and so on. Teachers could provide an initial reading, and students could practise their own readings in pairs or small groups. Early rhythmic readings of a complete poem can be useful in getting students to attend to the poet's use of sound before looking at individual sound effects. Much importance should then be addressed to students' own initial impressions of the poems. Teachers should ask such questions as: ▪ Which words do you find most striking / vivid / disturbing / moving [etc.]? ▪ Which sounds are particularly memorable? ▪ Which images are most powerful or striking? ▪ Which senses does the poet particularly appeal to? ▪ What are your first impressions of the speaker of the poem (if there is one)? Students could write down their initial answers before proceeding to discussion in small groups. The discussion should seek to build on initial responses, with questioners asking <i>why</i> particular aspects were memorable and striking, and so on. In this way they are considering how the poet's writing creates particular effects. The priority at this stage is to tease out the students' own responses to	resource for Coursework or preparation for the Unseen paper. <i>Notes for Teachers on Poetry Anthology</i> - on Cambridge website under IGCSE Literature (English)

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		the writing. They should be reassured that all readers of poetry sometimes find poems obscure or ambiguous. They should be taught that there is no right answer, and that there can be different interpretations <i>so long as</i> there is valid evidence to support them. They should not be armed with a checklist of poetic terms. This can often lead to a descriptive rather than properly exploratory approach. A particularly illuminating way of getting students to appreciate the poet at work is to listen to poets reading their poems. The www.poetryarchive.org.uk provides an excellent resource, showcasing the work of contemporary poets writing in English.	Online www.poetryarchive.org.uk
		2. Detailed study of the poems Before exploring the poems in detail with students, teachers' preparation might usefully include: ▪ reviewing past papers for types of poetry questions set at IGCSE ▪ devising a list of IGCSE-style essay for use at various stages of the course (including for mock examinations). The <i>Notes for Teachers on Poetry Anthology</i> provides examples of learner-centred approaches to enable students to work towards a detailed appreciation of the poems. The tasks suggested could be worked on individually, in pairs or in small groups – preferably a mixture of all three approaches. The teacher is then responsible for directing feedback and keeping the discussion focused primarily on how poets achieve their effects. After various contexts for discussion and close study of each poem, students should be responsible for producing a carefully annotated copy of the poem. In the left margin students should summarise the content of each stanza (or stage) of the poem. This will remind them of the structure and overview of the poem. Key words, phrases, sounds and rhymes could be highlighted in the body of the poem, with brief comments on their effect appended in the right margin. Students might find it useful at this stage to colour-coordinate their highlighting of: ▪ imagery	Past questions for 0486 – on Teacher Support website <i>Notes for Teachers on Poetry Anthology</i> Copies of each poem – for students to annotate <i>Cambridge IGCSE Literature in English – Unit 3 on Responding to Poetry texts</i>

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		▪ sound devices ▪ rhetorical devices These annotated copies can be amended, or added to, at later stages of their study. Teachers should emphasise that a detailed appreciation of the poems is the result of: ▪ re-readings of poems, especially aloud ▪ a detailed exploration of the precise effects created by particular words and sounds ▪ consideration of the way the poem is structured: how it begins, develops and ends It should be stressed that listing poetic terms is not at all the same as analysis. More creditworthy is the sustained and detailed exploration of <i>the ways in which poets achieve their effects</i>. The student who writes that ‘Marvell’s use of “Time’s winged chariot” is personification’ has barely begun to explore the poet’s language. It conveys nothing of the way Marvell captures the sense of time passing with incredible speed. Link with the Unseen paper Work on the set text poems provides a very useful preparation for the Unseen Paper, since the same skills of close analysis are assessed in that paper. If students are taking the Unseen route through the syllabus, teachers could use some of the poems as practice unseen poems. Early activities could require students to write two or three paragraphs in which they respond to a set text poem (or part of one) they have not yet discussed in class.	Recent Unseen papers – the Poetry questions
		3. Preparing students for IGCSE-style Poetry questions The purpose of these questions is to enable students to show their detailed appreciation of the poet at work. It is useful to look at the wording of questions on recent past papers, as teachers can apply similar	Recent 0486 past questions – on Teacher Support website

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		wording to their own questions. Questions often use words such as the following, designed to elicit personal responses to the poetic writing: ▪ memorable ▪ vivid ▪ moving ▪ dramatic ▪ tense ▪ striking ▪ amusing ▪ ironic Teachers will note that empathic questions are not set on Poetry texts. The first question on each Poetry set text deals with a particular poem (or extract from a poem), and from 2012 the poem will be printed on Paper 1 as is the case with Papers 4 and 5. The second and third questions set on poetry questions are general essay questions. Students should be taught to read carefully the key words and rubrics of these questions. They might ask for students to write about one poem or two poems. The poems could be specified or students might have to select from a list. Or the student might have a free choice of poem(s). Teachers should devise a range of question types in order to prepare students adequately for the examination questions. Where questions ask for students to write about two poems, there will be no requirement to compare poems. Students should be given opportunities to present to the class their own ideas about the poems they study. Using PowerPoint and the interactive whiteboard, students can explore aspect of form, structure and language they find interesting. They might also gather a range of images from the internet: for example, they could compare the various pictorial interpretations of Tennyson's <i>The Lady of Shalott</i>. Drama-focused activities will help students to consider the distinctive voices they hear in the poems they read. Students' written responses	Copies of key extracts Teacher-devised questions <i>Cambridge IGCSE Literature in English – Unit 3 on Responding to Poetry texts</i>

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		Students should have regular opportunities to practise responding in writing to poetry 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' the poem(s) for themselves. Activities might focus on the selection of relevant, as opposed to, peripheral detail found in the poems. A line-by-line account can too readily descend into narration and description. Teachers could compare different exemplar scripts to reinforce the point: students should work out which of two responses is more analytical, and give reasons why. Teachers should provide opportunities for students to practise effective ways of planning poetry essays. This in turn will emphasise the importance of selecting relevant evidence and steer students away from an exhaustive approach which can affect adversely the quality of analysis. Later in the course, it would be beneficial for students to mark their own and others' responses to Poetry 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. They could indicate examples of: ▪ generalisations about use of language ▪ unsupported assertions ▪ repetition of points More positively they could tick points which are thoughtful and sensitive, and quotations which are relevant.	Students' own writing – exemplar scripts Assessment criteria – supplied in all copies of mark schemes
		4. Revision of set poems Teachers should provide opportunities for: • further readings aloud	

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		• re-visiting and improving earlier notes • discussing poems in the light of the list of practice questions • practice tests and teacher feedback. An extension activity might be for each student to be allocated a poem (with the teacher providing suitable differentiation). Each student then practises reading the poem aloud, leading to a recording. This need not consume too much lesson time, as the activity could be done largely for homework or as part of revision.	