



Welsh Joint Education Committee
Cyd-Bwyllgor Addysg Cymru

GCSE English and English Literature

***Suggestions for
coursework***

from first examination in 2004

March 2002

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Introduction

As you will know, revised specifications for GCSE *English* and GCSE *English Literature* for 2004 onwards have now been approved. Teaching will start on two-year courses in September 2002, and on one-year courses in September 2003.

Whilst the changes are, on the whole, fairly minor, and the overall structure and content of the assessment will be familiar, we felt that the new coursework requirements did require some further explanation. This booklet will, we hope, provide this. We also plan to discuss these aspects at this autumn's INSET sessions.

In order to keep the booklet's size manageable, and not to overburden teachers with repeated information, we have generally only included details of the changed requirements. For a full account of all requirements, reference must be made to the GCSE *English* and *English Literature* specifications for 2004.

We are very grateful to Stuart Sage, the Principal Coursework Moderator, and Jane Hingley, the Principal Oral Coursework Moderator, whose contributions form the bulk of this booklet. We hope you find their advice useful. If you have any questions about any aspect of either of the new specifications, please contact Hugh Lester at the WJEC: phone 029 2026 5023 or email hugh.lester@wjec.co.uk

Written coursework

GCSE English

Written coursework 20%	
• Reading: Welsh relevance*/Shakespeare play*	} One to be based on poetry, one on drama
• Reading: Different cultures and traditions*	
• Writing: Either to explore, imagine, entertain or to inform, explain, describe	
• Writing: Either to argue, persuade, advise or to analyse, review, comment	

*May also be used for *English Literature* coursework

As in the past:

- The Written coursework folder will account for 20% of total mark;
- Each piece of work will be marked out of twenty and methods of assessment and moderation are unchanged;
- At least one piece of work must be hand written;
- One piece of work must be written under supervised conditions;
- One piece of Reading may be assessed orally.

Changes from the past:

- Reading and Writing are equally weighted;
- Two Reading and two Writing pieces are required;
- *Other Cultures* is now known as *Different Cultures*;
- The Writing requirements are common to both the Welsh and English version of the specifications;
- The Welsh and English versions of the folder are designed to facilitate delivery of the National Curriculum Orders in Wales and England respectively. There are, therefore, slight differences in the Reading content as a result of differences in the National Curriculum documentation for the two countries.

Summary of coursework requirements in GCSE English

Reading

Welsh version

Two pieces of work

- Different Cultures (see page 4)
- Welsh relevance (see page 4)

One piece must be based on the study of poetry selected from the range read during the course (around 1000 lines) and the other on the study of drama.

English version

Two pieces of work:

- Study of a Shakespeare play
- Different Cultures poetry work selected from the range read during the course (around 1000 lines)

Writing

Two pieces of work

- Open writing similar to the Writing tasks on Paper 1.
(Writing to 'Explore, imagine, entertain, inform, explain, describe')
- Closed writing similar to the Writing tasks on Paper 2.
(Writing to 'Argue, persuade, advise, analyse, review, comment')

Reading - Welsh version

Centres are required to study a text by a Welsh writer writing in English or that has a Welsh setting or special relevance to Wales. In all likelihood, they will choose 'Welsh relevance' poetry written by Welsh men and women (e.g. RS Thomas, Dylan Thomas, Gillian Clarke, Harri Webb, Leslie Norris, Tony Conran, Mike Jenkins, Henry Vaughan). However, it is conceivable that poems written about Wales by English writers could be considered (e.g. Hopkins' *St Beuno* poems). The critical issue is whether or not those poems have a significant Welsh relevance.

If Welsh drama is chosen for the Welsh Relevance section of the folder, the obvious choice will be *Under Milk Wood*, though the plays of Emylyn Williams and Saunders Lewis (in translation) could also be studied. *Act One Wales*, the collection of one act plays published by Seren, might prove useful or, if the plays are felt suitable for their students, centres might choose to read *House of America* by Edward Thomas or *Streetlife* by Karl Francis. A useful source of texts can be found on the Welsh Books Council's web site (www.gwales.com).

Students are also required to write an assignment on a text or texts by a writer from a different cultural background. If drama is chosen for this section, the selection of texts is likely to be dictated by the choice of drama text for the Literature examination. As in the past, essays on *A View from the Bridge* will figure large in the folder composition. However, centres might choose to look at another play by Miller (for example, *The Crucible* or *Death of a Salesman*) or work by O'Casey, Synge, or Wilde. However, if the drama is covered by work on a Welsh Relevance text, then it will be possible to study the poetry by the usual selection of Different Cultures writers (e.g. Angelou, Heaney, Frost, Burns etc.). It will not be possible, as has been the case in the past, for Welsh centres to enter work on Welsh poets in this section of the folder.

Please note that all the examples of texts given above are suggestions only, and teachers might well feel that there are other works which will better suit their students. If in any doubt about whether a text fulfils specification requirements, please contact Hugh Lester at the Board.

Reading - English version

The situation here is more familiar. The Reading part of the folder may be completed with an essay on a Shakespeare play as in the past and a piece on poetry from another culture, including work by Welsh poets.

Writing

The Open Writing fulfils the requirement for students to perform one or more of the following: explore, imagine, entertain, inform, explain and/or describe. In reality, this will be a story or description of a subjective type, similar to the kind of task likely to be set in Paper 1 of the examination.

The Closed Writing is designed to test the ability of the student to argue, persuade, advise, analyse, review and/or comment. Typical work in this section will include reports, letters, speeches, reviews etc. This type of task will be similar to those set in Paper 2 but will probably require a rather longer response (e.g. two or three letters about a particular issue).

Sample folders

Welsh version

1. Welsh Relevance: What does *Under Milk Wood* gain and lose from being a radio play?
2. Different Cultures: Compare and contrast *Poem for my Sister* by Liz Lochhead and *Sisters* by Wendy Cope.
3. Open Writing: Autobiographical writing.
4. Closed Writing: A Report to the headteacher on improving the school environment.

An alternative approach:

1. Welsh Relevance: Compare and contrast the images of Wales presented in RS Thomas' *Welsh Landscape* and Gillian Clarke's *East Moors*.
2. Different Cultures: Show by close examination of the text how far the women in *A View from the Bridge* are treated well by the men.
3. and 4. As above

English version

1. Shakespeare: How far is Macbeth to blame for his downfall?
2. Different Cultures: Compare and contrast Mayo Angelou's *Woman Work* with Heaney's *Overheard in County Sligo*.
3. Open Writing: Autobiographical writing.
4. Closed Writing: A Report to a Headteacher on improving the school environment.

Notes

In the examples above, the poetry pieces are comparisons. Comparisons are not required for the English folder but since it is likely that the poetry pieces will be dual entered, the sample includes comparative work. It is only necessary for one of the poems to fulfil the Different Cultures or Welsh Relevance requirement.

Care needs to be taken to ensure that the closed writing is not plagiarised. Some tasks lend themselves to this type of approach. For example, students asked to write a 'project' style piece on a general topic (e.g. sporting activities, travel guides or an issue like drugs, abortion, vivisection etc) have been known to copy the entire contents of their work from the internet or some other source. It is wise to ensure that the type of task chosen does not allow this approach.

GCSE English Literature

Specification A coursework (30%)	
1.	Poetry} including pre- and
2.	Poetry} post-1914 works
3.	Prose } texts to be chosen so that pre- and post-
4.	Drama} 1914 works in each genre are covered
	across coursework and written paper
	(At least two assignments must show evidence of ability to make comparisons between texts.)

Specification B coursework (30%)	
1.	Poetry pre -1914
2.	Prose pre -1914
3.	Drama (pre-and post-1914 to be covered across coursework and paper)
4.	Wider Reading (any genre, pre- or post-1914)

There are no changes to the requirements for the Literature folder except for the opportunity provided to replace work on prose fiction with work on literary non-fiction, as long as the pre-/post-1914 balance is maintained. Some examples of the type of writing centres might wish to study if they choose this option include *Bad Blood* by Lorna Sage or *Once In A House On Fire* by Andrea Ashworth (accounts of childhood, the first in 'fifties' Flintshire, the second in Manchester in the 'seventies and 'eighties), Nick Hornby's *Fever Pitch*, *Lost in Music* by Giles Smith (his experiences in an unsuccessful band in the 1980s), or work by George Orwell or Bill Bryson. Please check with Hugh Lester if in any doubt about a text's suitability.

Sample dual entry folders

Welsh version

GCSE English

1. Welsh Relevance: A comparison of Clarke's *Miracle on St David's Day* with Wordsworth's *To Daffodils*.
2. Different Cultures: Write Abigail's diary entries (*The Crucible*) beginning with Betty being taken sick and ending when she runs away. Use appropriate style and language.
3. Open writing
4. Closed writing.

GCSE English Literature (Specification A)

1. Poetry pre 1914: See 1 above
2. Poetry post 1914: Compare and contrast Maya Angelou's *Still I Rise* with Alice Walker's *Remember*.
3. Prose: How does Dickens create suspense in *The Signalman*?
(Prose exam text *To Kill a Mockingbird*)
4. Drama: See 2 above
(Drama exam text: *Romeo and Juliet*.)

GCSE English Literature (Specification B)

1. Poetry Pre 1914: A comparison of *To his Coy Mistress* (Marvell) and *The Willing Mistress* (Behn).
2. Prose Pre 1914: Compare *The Fury* (Barstow) with *The Story of an Hour* (Chopin).
3. Drama: See 2. in the English Folder
(Drama exam text: *Romeo and Juliet*)
4. Wider reading: See 1. in the English folder.

English version

GCSE English

1. Shakespeare: How far are Romeo and Juliet responsible for their own deaths?
2. Different Cultures: Compare Seamus Heaney's *Churning Day* and *An Advancement of Learning*.
3. Open Writing
4. Closed Writing

GCSE English Literature (Specification A)

1. Pre 1914 poetry: A comparison of Blake's *London* with Wordsworth's *On Westminster Bridge*.
2. Post 1914 poetry: See 2. above.
3. Prose: How does Jane Austen develop the relationship between Elizabeth and Darcy up to the point of Darcy's first proposal?

(Prose exam text: *Stone Cold*)
4. Drama: See 1. above.

(Drama exam text: *An Inspector Calls*)

GCSE English Literature (Specification B)

1. Poetry pre 1914: Compare and contrast Donne's *The Sunne Rising* and *The Flea*.
2. Prose pre 1914: To what extent is Tess responsible for her own fate?
3. Drama: See 1. in the English folder

(Drama exam text: *An Inspector Calls*.)
4. Wider Reading: See 2. in the English folder.

Teachers are invited to contact Hugh Lester if they wish to discuss the suitability of texts they are considering.

Oral assignment assessing Reading

It is still possible for one Reading piece in English and one in Literature to be assessed orally. However, it must of course be marked using the Reading, not the Speaking and Listening, criteria.

Speaking and Listening coursework

Speaking and Listening 20%

Variety of tasks. Assessment should focus on:

- extended individual contributions
- group discussion and interaction
- drama focused activities

The following notes are intended to give detailed explanation and examples for the Speaking and Listening requirements in the new specification. They are particularly aimed at those teachers with less experience who may be uncertain of the type of activities suitable to meet the various criteria. It is also hoped, however, that they may stimulate ideas for those who have been in the profession rather longer!

The introduction of the drama-focused activity is perhaps the area that causes teachers most concern. However, as we will show, this type of task is already used extensively. In addition to the advice given in this booklet, there will be training material on video to complement the new specifications. This aspect will also be considered in some detail at this autumn's INSET sessions.

Many of the activities are tried and tested by teachers in a variety of centres across Wales and England. They make use of both literary and non-literary based materials and should hopefully allow plenty of scope for all abilities. There is some inevitable overlap between criteria and tasks and thus definitely scope for using the same task to assess more than one criterion.

Thanks go to you if you recognise one of 'your' assignments!

Changes from the past:

- Assessment to focus on:
 - ⇒ extended individual contributions
 - ⇒ group discussion and interaction
 - ⇒ drama-focused activities (e.g. role play, "hot-seating" etc)
- Oral grade no longer separately reported
- Changes to the moderation arrangements:
 - ⇒ moderation tape no longer used
 - ⇒ advisory visits continue as at present
 - ⇒ statistics and advisory visit reports used to decide if moderation visit required

Group discussion and interaction

A group **can** include a pair. Tasks in this area could come into any of the ranges. They are more likely to be of an informal nature, but could be part of a more formal simulated situation.

Examples:

explain, describe, narrate

- In pairs/groups discuss personal recollections or experiences – perhaps being lost as a child, a dare, an accident.
- As members of an inquiry into a specific event (e.g. an accident/incident in school) give a focused account. Students could take on a variety of roles – headteacher, governor, pupil involved, parent for example. This might be an interview style of event, and require more formal language.

explore, analyse, imagine

- Use literary material to analyse and then discuss preferences – probably as a precursor to written coursework. Poetry works well in this situation, or it could be focused on the opening of a short story or novel, looking at specific techniques, the building up of atmosphere, or the first impressions of a character.
- After such deliberations, present findings in a more formal manner – giving a presentation to the rest of the class with both or all members of the group participating.
- Poetry ‘jigsaws’ – cut up a poem into separate lines and ask students to reassemble them, talking through their reasons for arranging them in a particular way.

discuss, argue, persuade

- Use controversial statements to elicit points of view in pairs/groups; this is a good warm-up exercise to get pupils talking. It can also be used in a ‘Does the team think...’ type of scenario, using a chairperson. Members of the audience then put forward their questions for debate.
- More formal debate/inquiry/committee format. Suitable topics might concern the need for specific facilities in either the area or the school/college. Perhaps the possibility of Lottery funding might spark discussion on how such money should be spent.
- Preparation for presentations/ performances including discussion of production. Students could discuss how a particular scene in one of their set plays might be staged; what sort of setting could be used; which actors/actresses they might like to use should they be making a film. They could also direct other students in acting out a particular scene – say a scene involving Antonio in *The Merchant of Venice*, where the aim is to influence the audience into feeling unsympathetic towards him.

Individual extended contributions

This may well be of a more formal nature. In addition to the more usual solo presentations, this can encompass contributions within a pair or group. However, there must be evidence of a sustained contribution. The size of the audience can be suited to the situation and the candidate – it does not have to be a presentation to a whole class. Less confident students may prefer to talk to a small group of friends, for example.

Examples:

explain, describe, narrate

- An individual talk on a personal interest. This could also make use of an audience who might wish to question the speaker. Reading from a script should be strongly discouraged, of course.
- Explanation of a specific process; a journey; rules for a game. These more concrete tasks can be especially helpful for those who lack more specific interests, or are less confident.
- Narrating a personal experience or memory. To give an example, think of the scene in *Kes* where the boy tells about the time he and a friend filled wellies with tadpoles! This task might be assessed within the pair or small group situation if one – or more – of the students makes a longer contribution.

explore, analyse, imagine

- Reporting back on a group discussion of, for example, poetry. This would be where one person from the original discussion acts as the representative and sums up the major points and views of the whole group. They may use such aids as OHP acetates or charts/diagrams.
- Present an interpretation of a character. Again this might develop from a group discussion. Perhaps they might look at the character of Silas Marner and then one member would give the overview of their interpretation of him. There would also be room for sequel speculation. A task which works well is one based on what some of the characters might think at the end of *An Inspector Calls* and how they reflect on what has already happened and anticipate the arrival of the real Inspector.

discuss, argue, persuade

- Present a point of view with a view to persuading a partner, rather like the verbal 'boxing match' on the 2002 Moderating tape.
- Participate in a formal debate. This allows for more formal language, and can be particularly suitable for the higher grade of candidate.
- Take a leading part in a group discussion. This can involve both literary and non-literary topics providing the aim is to persuade. It must, however, be emphasised that the contribution should be quite extensive. One student could be targeted with the remit that they are to direct the flow of the argument within the group. The other members of the group would be expected to argue back!

Drama focused activities

This area offers opportunity to work **in a role presenting a character other than oneself** whether during improvisation, hot-seating (where one student takes on a specific role of a character in either a novel or play and is questioned by others in the group about their actions, motives etc.) or taking part in a scripted scene. It could also include different interpretations of a script or its direction.

explain, describe, narrate

- In role, explain your motives at a specific point in a play or novel (for example, characters at the end of *An Inspector Calls* or *Of Mice and Men*).
- In role, tell a story from the past told to you by an older relative, as if it had happened to you (perhaps a war memory or an underground accident)
- Telling about an incident in school or within the community from the point of view of different participants. Students could take on the role of any local character who had been in the news - perhaps a pensioner who had been robbed; someone who received an award; someone who performed a rescue.

explore, analyse, imagine

- Role-play involving characters from a text in a prequel or sequel. The roles of Lennie and George provide good material here. Other possibilities could be: Cousin Kate; the soldier in *Dulce et Decorum Est*; characters in *An Inspector Calls*; the man in *The Signalman*.
- Working on a scene from a script and offering different interpretations. A key scene could be selected from a set text, and different criteria could be suggested to different groups to allow a number of different options. For example, the scene in *Macbeth* where Macbeth receives the news that he is Thane of Cawdor could be directed in different ways to show Macbeth's surprise, incredulity or fear. Students could experiment with different ways in which Shylock might be presented in his first meeting with Antonio to either emphasise Antonio's contempt or Shylock's cunning.

discuss, argue, persuade

- Hot seating of a character. This could either be someone in role of a character from a set text, or from any other play, novel or short story. It could also be someone defending a specific view – for example a pro- or anti- hunting representative put in the 'hot seat' and fielding questions from an audience. This latter option would probably be more suited to an able candidate, or certainly to one able to withstand some pressure.
- Taking on different roles in a simulated situation – for example members of a planning committee enquiry. This would be based on non-literary material. Each character would have a specific role. For example, if the issue concerned the possible building of some controversial unit – say an abattoir or a secure unit for young offenders – near to a residential area, or near to the school/college, there would be a number of likely 'characters'. These might be the local MP, a parent representing the local protest group, the business/social services representative etc. The 'committee' would have a chairperson, and the audience would be able to present questions after each member of the committee had made their position clear. These events can be quite dynamic! The members of the audience can also – of course – take on various roles if they wish.
- Directing a scene to achieve a specific effect. This could use pre-scripted material, but it does not have to be a published script. Students could write their own script on something familiar like a young person coming home late, and then use different interpretations of the words/actions in order to persuade the audience to sympathise with different characters.



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