



Cambridge Assessment
International Education



Interactive

Learner Guide

Cambridge O Level Literature in English 2010

For examination from 2023



Version 1

Cambridge
Pathway 

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Section 1: About this guide

This guide explains what you need to know about your Cambridge O Level Literature in English course and examinations.

It will help you to:

- ✓ understand what skills you should develop by taking this O Level course
- ✓ understand how you will be assessed
- ✓ understand what we are looking for in the answers you write
- ✓ plan your revision programme
- ✓ revise, by providing revision tips and an interactive revision checklist (Section 6).

This subject offers you the opportunity to read and respond to a range of literature texts written in English. You will study poetry, prose fiction and drama. The course is designed to help you deepen your appreciation of how writers use English to express meanings and achieve effects in their texts.

Key aims of the course are for learners to learn to read for pleasure and to explore universal issues which will help you to gain a better understanding of yourself and the world you live in.

Section 2: Syllabus content – what you need to know about

This section gives you an outline of the syllabus content for this course. There are three routes/options through the course. Your teacher(s) will have decided already which one of the three options below you are following, and you need to be clear about which one it is.

Option A: 100% exam route

For this option, you will take two exam papers. You may not take your texts into the exam with you for these two papers.

Paper	Title	% of the total marks
Paper 1	Poetry and Prose	50%
Paper 2	Drama (closed book)	50%

Option B: The Unseen route

If you are being prepared to sit the Unseen paper, you will take three exam papers. Note that for Paper 3, you will be able to take a clean copy of your Drama text into the exam with you.

Paper	Title	% of the total marks
Paper 1	Poetry and Prose	50%
Paper 3	Drama (open book)	25%
Paper 4	Unseen	25%

Option C: The Coursework route

If you are doing Coursework, you will take the following components, which include two exam papers. Note that for Paper 3, you will be able to take a clean copy of your Drama text into the exam with you.

Paper	Title	% of the total marks
Paper 1	Poetry and Prose	50%
Paper 3	Drama (open book)	25%
Component 5	Coursework	25%

Make sure you always check the latest syllabus, which is available at www.cambridgeinternational.org

Section 3: How you will be assessed

In Section 2, you learned that the syllabus for Cambridge O Level Literature in English offers three different routes. Find out from your teacher which route you will be taking, and which order you will be preparing for the various papers.

Components at a glance

The table below gives you further information about the examination papers and the Coursework component. Read the information about the components you will be taking.

Component	Time and marks	Skills assessed	Details	Percentage of qualification
Paper 1: Poetry and Prose	1 hour 30 minutes	Detailed knowledge of texts Understanding of main ideas and deeper implications Analysing writers' use of language, structure and form Writing an informed personal response	You answer two questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • one on a poetry text • one on a prose text. You may not take texts into the exam.	50%
Paper 2: Drama	1 hour 30 minutes	Detailed knowledge of texts Understanding of main ideas and deeper implications Analysing writers' use of language, structure and form Writing an informed personal response	You answer two questions, each on a different drama text. You must answer: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • one passage-based question • one essay question. You may not take texts into the exam.	50%
Paper 3: Drama (Open Text)	45 minutes	Detailed knowledge of texts Understanding of main ideas and deeper implications Analysing writers' use of language, structure and form Writing an informed personal response	You answer any one question. You may take a clean copy of your drama text into the exam.	25%

Component	Time and marks	Skills assessed	Details	Percentage of qualification
Paper 4: Unseen	1 hour 15 minutes	Detailed knowledge of texts Understanding of main ideas and deeper implications Analysing writers' use of language, structure and form Writing an informed personal response	You answer one question: either poetry or prose.	25%
Component 5	N/A	Detailed knowledge of texts Understanding of main ideas and deeper implications Analysing writers' use of language, structure and form Writing an informed personal response	You submit a portfolio of two assignments, each on a different text.	25%

About each paper

Component/ Section	Time and marks	Questions	% of total mark	% of total mark
Paper 1: Poetry and Prose Section A: Poetry	45 minutes 25 marks	You answer one question out of two on your set poetry text. The poems are printed on the question paper, so you can focus on answering the question rather than memorising long chunks of quotation. Highlight the key words in the question and, as you read through the poem, annotate key words and phrases you might explore in your answer.	50%	25%

Component/ Section	Time and marks	Questions	% of total mark	% of total mark
Paper 1: Poetry and Prose Section B: Prose	45 minutes 25 marks	<p>There will be two questions on each set text:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • one passage-based question • one essay question. <p>You answer one question. You are free to decide which of the two questions on your set text you wish to answer.</p> <p>Highlight the key words in the question you choose.</p> <p>If you decide to answer the passage-based question, annotate the key words and phrases in the passage you might explore in your answer.</p> <p>If you decide to answer the essay question, write a brief plan, using bullet points or a mind map.</p>	50%	25%
Paper 2: Drama	For each question: 45 minutes 25 marks	<p>You answer two questions, each on a different drama text.</p> <p>You must answer: one passage-based question one essay question.</p> <p>For the passage-based question, annotate the key words and phrases in the passage you might explore in your answer.</p> <p>For the essay question, write a brief plan, using bullet points or a mind map.</p>	Each question is 50% of the paper	Each question is 25% of overall marks
Paper 3: Drama (Open Text)	45 minutes 25 marks	<p>You answer any one question on your drama set text.</p> <p>If you decide to answer the passage-based question on your set text, annotate the key words and phrases in the passage you might explore in your answer.</p> <p>If you decide to answer the essay question, write a brief plan, using bullet points or a mind map.</p> <p>You may take a clean copy of your set text into the exam – that means no annotation, highlighting, underlining etc. Make sure you know the text well, so you do not spend too much time flicking through the pages.</p>	100%	25%
Paper 4: Unseen	1 hour 15 minutes 25 marks	<p>You choose one question to answer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • either on a poem • or on a prose extract. <p>Three bullets are provided to support you.</p> <p>Spend the first 20 minutes reading the question paper and planning your answer.</p> <p>Highlight the key words of the question and the three bullets.</p> <p>As you read the poem or prose extract, annotate key words and phrases you might explore in your answer.</p> <p>Save a little time at the end for checking your answer.</p>	100%	25%

Component/ Section	Time and marks	Questions	% of total mark	% of total mark
Component 5: Coursework	25 marks	<p>You submit two assignments.</p> <p>They should be on different texts, though one may be on an examination set text.</p> <p>Each assignment should be between 600 and 1200 words.</p> <p>Make sure you put the full title at the top of each assignment. Answer the question, making sure every sentence adds something to your argument.</p> <p>Avoid writing irrelevant background information and overly long introductions and conclusions.</p> <p>Your teacher:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will set tasks which allow you to demonstrate the skills outlined in the assessment objectives • can give discuss your progress in general terms • must not mark, correct or edit your draft assignment. 		25%

Section 4: What skills will be assessed

The areas of knowledge, understanding and skills that you will be assessed on are called **assessment objectives** (AO). The questions you face in the exam papers and the coursework assignments (if you are taking the Coursework option) are designed to allow you to show all the skills required. If you know your texts thoroughly and answer the questions thoughtfully, you will have covered the assessment objectives.

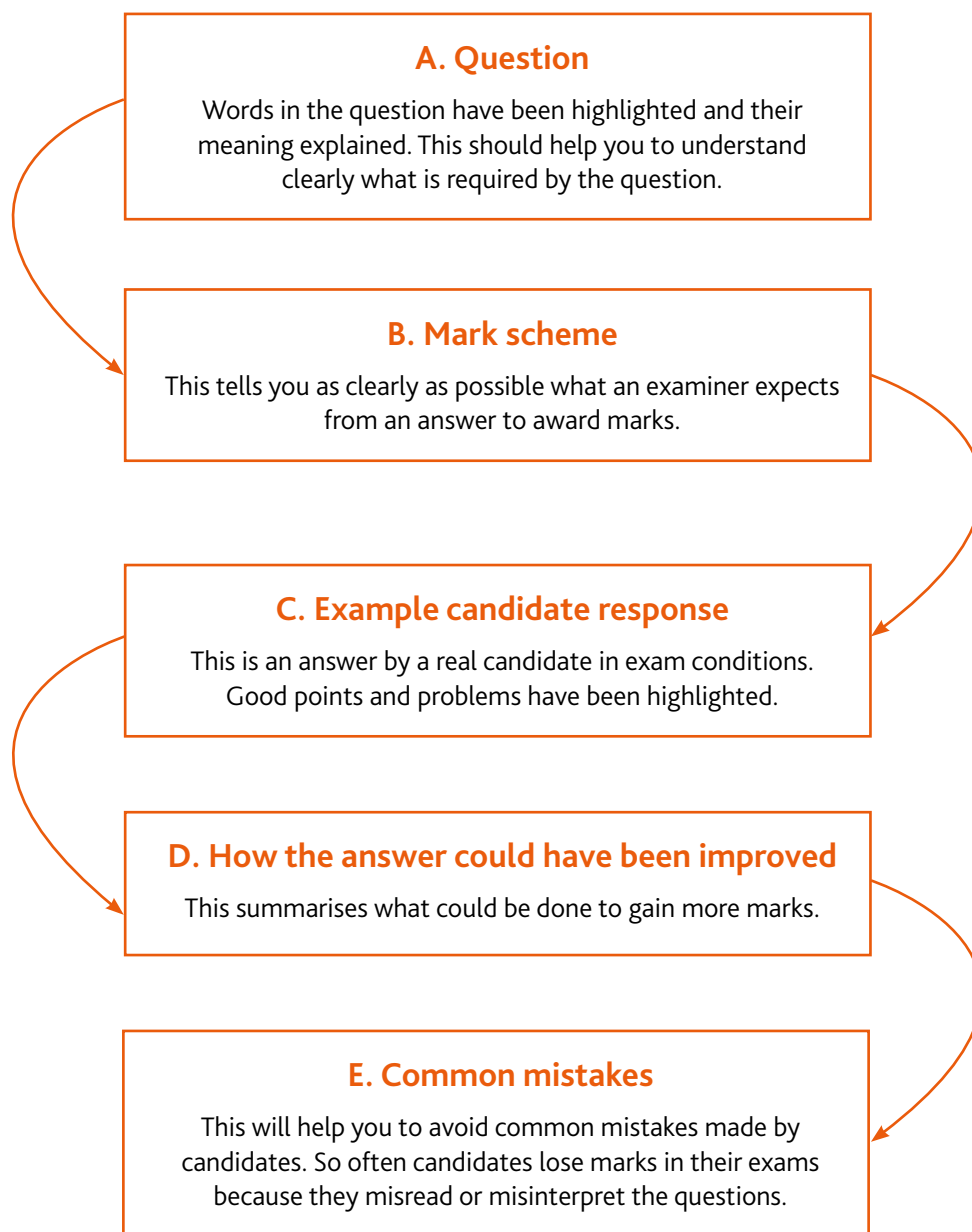
The table below explains what the course's four assessment objectives mean for you. For each question (or coursework assignment) you do, the assessment objectives are weighted at 25%.

Assessment objectives (AO)	What do you need to be able to do?
AO1 Show detailed knowledge of the content of literary texts in the three main forms (drama, poetry and prose), supported by reference to the text	Show you understand the detail of your texts. Use quotations and indirect references to support your views or argument when answering questions.
AO2 Understand the meanings of literary texts and their contexts, and explore texts beyond surface meanings to show deeper awareness of ideas and attitudes	Understand the main ideas, settings, events, characters (as appropriate). Appreciate the deeper implications of texts (i.e. 'reading between the lines'). Understand the significance of part of a text in relation to the whole text.
AO3 Recognise and appreciate ways in which writers use language, structure and form to create and shape meanings and effects	Explore how writers use language, structure and form to convey impressions and ideas. Explore how writers use language, structure and form to present settings, characters and events. Explore how writers use techniques to achieve specific effects for readers (or audiences of drama texts).
AO4 Communicate a sensitive and informed personal response to literary texts	Give a personal response to the question and text (rather than one from your teacher or copied from websites). Give an informed response by supporting your ideas with references to the text.

Section 5: Example candidate response

This section takes you through an example question and learner response from a past paper. It will help you to see how to identify command words and to understand what is required in your response. A command word or phrase, is the part of the question that tells you what you need to do with your knowledge, for example, you might need to describe something, explain something, argue a point of view or list what you know.

All information, advice and references to marks awarded in this section are specific to the example question and response being demonstrated. It should give you an idea of how your responses might be viewed by an examiner. In your own examination, you will need to pay careful attention to what each question is asking you to do.



A. Question

The question used in this example is from the Cambridge IGCSE Literature (English) 0486 June 2015 Paper 12 Poetry and Prose, Question 5. 'The City Planners' by Margaret Atwood referred to in this question comes from Songs of Ourselves Part 4.

5. Read this poem, and then answer the question that follows it.

'The City Planners' by Margaret Atwood

To **what extent** does Atwood **make you feel** that human activities are pointless in The City Planners?

To what extent

This question asks you to consider and evaluate the extent that the writer communicates the focus of the question. This question is asking us how much Atwood communicates and emphasises her ideas about the pointlessness of human activity in her poem. It asks us to evaluate and think about how she has used language and structure devices to express this key idea/theme throughout the poem.

Therefore, this question required us to:

SELECT quotations that in some way show that types of human activity are pointless

EXPLAIN what each quotation means and how it highlights this idea

ANALYSE how key words and phrases in each quotation makes the reader feel about this idea.

... make you feel ...

This part of the question is worth thinking about. How are we made to feel? Here, the question is guiding us to consider the different ways the poet's use of language and structure devices affect our thinking and feelings.

B. Mark scheme

All questions are marked out of 25. The assessment objectives for the paper are:

AO1 Show detailed knowledge of the content of literacy texts in the three main forms (drama, poetry and prose), supported by reference to the text.

Every question is a platform for you to show that you are able to fully meet the assessment objectives. Therefore, demonstrating that you know the meaning and messages conveyed in any text is vital. Before you can do that you need to ensure that you select 6–7 relevant quotations which: contain a range of language and/or structure devices that you can comment upon in your paragraphs, and help you to answer the question. A high level response will incorporate these quotations into the explanations of meaning and context to give a very precise and specific response.

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.

It is important that you try your best to maintain a response that has explanations and analyses that is supported with reasons. Do not just state your ideas. Use the words 'because', 'as' or 'since' to offer your reasons as to how the writer's use of language and structure devices achieve the particular effects that you mention. Be sure to link your ideas to the question. Your individuality and insight (AO2) are determined by how well you have studied the poems and understood the themes and messages. It is how you explain and analyse the writer's use of language and structure devices in relation to the question.

AO4 Communicate a sensitive and informed person response to literary texts.

This links to AO2 above. Your personal and evaluative engagement is your entire response to the text. Make sure you give reasons for your ideas that are relevant to the question.

The Level Descriptors cover marks from 0 to 25, and apply to the marking of each question. They guide examiners to an understanding of the qualities normally expected of, or typical of, work in a level. They are a means of general guidance.

The examiner marks your response by using the mark scheme. No matter what Level is awarded, all essays will have strong and weaker points. The examiner will not penalise you for incorrect statements (but try to be as accurate and relevant as possible). The examiner looks for the positives, and considers how well you have met the assessment objectives, and then matches your response to the Level on the mark scheme.

A strong answer for question 5 could include:

- Paragraphs that contain:
 1. relevant quotations that are central to the ideas of the essay question, and contain a variety of interesting language devices
 2. explanations of the meaning and context of the quotation(s) used; linking ideas to the question
 3. an analysis of how the effects of the poet's use of language devices and/or structure devices in the quotation(s) make the reader feel; linking ideas to the question.

Example of a structure paragraph:

The title of the poem seems innocent and matter of fact. However, the title highlights the focus of the poet's anger and contempt as these are the people that she holds responsible for the stagnant, conformist societies and the destruction of our environment that is now normal to us. The poem is written in free-verse which helps to reinforce the idea of the chaos and haphazard logic of the City Planners' thinking. Their creations lack logic and are out of touch with both nature, and limit the freedom of expression and individuality. It is also interesting that the stanza lengths decrease in size as the poem develops. This helps to emphasise the idea that what we as humans create will disappear and be lost over time as nature reclaims it.

Example of a regular paragraph:

The ways we are developing our living environments is limiting our freedoms and is against nature, 'what offends us is/ the sanities;/ the houses in pedantic rows; the planted/ sanitary trees' This emphasises how we are being confined by the creations of the City Planners as they are imposing a false sense of order and 'normality' that does not allow us to express our individualism. In addition, their creations are at odds with the chaos and irregular uniqueness of the natural world. 'Offends us' highlights the insult the people feel as a result. The poet uses 'us' to create a theme and scenario to persuade the reader that the planners are acting in a pointless and incorrect manner. The repetition of 'sanities' and 'sanitary' express the idea that what the planners are doing is contradicting nature as their creations seem so perfect and artificial in comparison to the real world. The sibilance in this quote conveys a contemptuous tone. In addition, the alliteration of the 'p' sound makes it seem as if the poet is spitting her words in disapproval at what the planners are doing.

Now let's look at the sample candidate's response to the question and the examiner's comments on this response.

C. Example candidate response and examiner comments

The answer below was written by a real candidate. The answer was awarded a mark equivalent to a grade A. The real candidate answer is presented on the left-hand side. The response has been typed and white spaces introduced between sections to make it easier to read. The examiner comments are included inside the orange boxes.

The examiner marks the answer as a whole, taking into consideration the overall Level. However, for the purpose of this example, the examiner has made specific comments about paragraphs to help you see what standard they each demonstrate.

To what extent does Atwood make you feel that human activities are pointless in *The City Planners*?

In Atwood's "The City Planner" there is a sense of pointlessness. 1

This is expressed by many different ways, these being very effective in making the reader perceive a look of use for human activity. 2

Firstly, the point which is easiest to identify is the way Atwood expresses her belief that nature will overcome the suburbs. This is shown 3 by "Future cracks in 4 the plaster", by expressing this, Atwood makes the reader feel like there is no point in any human activity, as nature will eventually destroy the suburb. 5

Another example of this is "houses capsized, will slide". This is a very effective way of describing the poet's view of the future as it uses direct, harsh language which makes the reader realise what "will" happen. This is because of the verb "will" by using 6 it, the writer describes the future in a way which is sure, like she has no doubt. Additionally, the word "capsized" personates the 7 houses and makes the reader sense hopelessness for the future, like the houses had no other choice but to slide. This sense of hopelessness makes the reader realise people living in these suburbs can't do anything

1 A brief introduction. Attempts to lay out the focus of the question, and what that means.

2 The introduction is quite general. As a result of this it does not match any of the assessment objectives.

3 State your quotation after your topic sentence. Do not waste words. 'This is shown by' is not necessary.

4 This is a relevant quotation but it comes from stanza 3. Respond with quotations in chronological order and try to respond to every section of the text in passage based questions.

5 Clear and carefully explained. The candidate supports their ideas with reasons here but there is a lack of development.

6 Candidate continues to offer reasons for their ideas. There is a clear attempt here to comment on the effects of language. However, the comment is underdeveloped. The writing shows an awareness rather than sensitive, detailed or considered ideas about how language is used to create effects on the reader in relation to the essay question.

7 The candidate makes an attempt to comment on the effects of individual words and phrases. An appreciation of imagery is evident here (even though the candidate identifies it as personification). Effects are explained and some understanding is evident. The ideas are relevant to the question, but lack detailed reasons to support ideas.

about nature overcoming men thus feeling worthless, and their actions pointless. **8**

Secondly, human activities seem pointless by the way **9** Atwood describe these. Atwood describes these suburbs as if they looked life. The way she does that is by describing human activity as their effect on inanimate objects, for example “the rational whine of a power mower”. By doing this, describing a lack of life, she makes people who live in these suburbs seem discouraged and bored and part of a routine, which makes the reader question the point of these actions,

10 as the people in the suburb aren’t enjoying them. Another way Atwood describes a lack of life is by saying “no shouting here, no shattered glass” this makes the reader think she is comparing these suburbs to where she lives. It feels as if she misses the “shouting” and “shattered glass”, which is not something someone misses normally; this just intensifies the lack of life even more by creating a sense of desperation for any sort of liveliness. This links to the theme of lack of life in the City Planners and also the [Ponners], another studied poem. **11**

Moreover, Atwood describes the city planners as people who control **12** nature and plot their suburbs inflexibly; “sketch transitory lines, rigid as wooden borders”. This makes the people in the suburbs feel controlled by them. As they are controlled, it feels pointless to take part in human activity, as in the end, they will only do what the city planners make them do. Another example of the city planners

8 The effects of the writer's language are considered here. However, a lack of detailed supporting reasons limits the comment to a Level 6. The ideas show a 'clear understanding' rather than a 'critical' or 'insightful' one.

9 Don't waste words. You only have 45 minutes to respond. Sentences like this do not fulfil any of the Assessment Objectives, so why use them?

10 Candidate links human activities with inanimate objects. The candidate gives the impression that this gives a lack of life to the suburbs. In turn, this suggests pointlessness because nobody is able to enjoy the fruits of any of the activities such as mowing grass.

11 No marks are given for comments about other poems studied in the anthology. The response should be focused on the poem and focus stated in the question.

12 There is a clear understanding of the poem and its deeper implications here. The candidate states that the Planners' activities are pointless because of the absolute control they have over the lives of everyday people.

controlling their lifestyle is “This is where the city planners tracing the panic of the suburb”: “The suburbs” is personified, by being related to its “panic” this personification helps to relate to the citizens in the suburbs, **13** as it is them who feel this sense of panic. By saying that it is the city planners that “trace~” or create this “panic” it is referring to the control they have over the **14** population. This sense of panic is indirectly sensed throughout the whole poem and links to the theme of discomfort within the order.

Overall this poem describes human activity as pointless mainly **15** because of the lack of life presented in this poem, but also because of the sense of hopelessness for the future.

13 The argument is developed and there is some exploration of the effects of language choices.

14 Some ideas are repetitive rather than elaborated and expanded upon.

15 The conclusion is quite general and misses the opportunity to interpret the text in relation to the candidate's opinions about the poet's messages and themes.
An attempt is made to summarise ideas in relation to the essay question.

D. How the answer could have been improved

Overall, the candidate develops their ideas about how the poet's use of language makes the reader feel in relation to the question. However, the paragraphs often contain explanations of meaning; which are not always fully developed, rather than analysis of effects.

This answer could have been improved if:

- The candidate had used 'because', 'as', 'since', or taken new sentences to support their ideas with detailed reasons when explaining and analysing (relates to AO1, AO2, AO3 and AO4).
- The candidate's explanations had included considerations of the use of irony, the poet's tone, and how the poet presents the forces of nature and time in relation to the question's focus (relates to AO1 and AO2).
- The candidate had analysed how particular words and phrases influence the reader's feelings about human activities being pointless, and how the forces of nature and time are depicted (relates to AO3 and AO4).
- The candidate had considered how the poet had used structural devices to communicate ideas to the reader about how human activities are pointless (relates to AO3 and AO4).

E. Common mistakes

There are a few things that you should avoid doing when answering questions on Poetry, and questions of this type. Read the following list to help you understand how to avoid common mistakes.

- Avoid being general and vague in your introduction. An introduction (like all of your other paragraphs) should address the assessment objectives in some way.
- Avoid being narrative. You get no marks for re-telling the story of the text!
- Make sure that every paragraph answers the question. Don't just write what you know about the poem. Each part of your essay should answer the essay question!
- Remember you are writing a Literature essay! Do not go off task and write a personal thesis, an essay about Historical or contemporary events or a scientific explanation.
- Respond to the whole text.
- Avoid unnecessary words in general.
- This example response does not comment on the effects of the poet's use of structure devices (AO3). In addition to considering the effects created by the poet's use of language, a consideration of the ways in which the poet communicates meaning through how they have laid out the poem can be important too.
- Avoid general and vague comments in a conclusion.

General advice

There are many things that you can do to avoid the common mistakes listed above.

1. In an introduction, summarise the meaning of the poem and the poet's attitude in no more than 3–4 lines. This will help you to demonstrate AO2. End by stating the focus of the essay question (e.g. In this poem, Atwood strongly conveys the idea that human activities are pointless). Alternatively, an introduction could be used to clarify what key terms of the question mean.
2. By using time connectives (i.e. 'then', 'after that', 'next') you are re-telling events. By using connectives that help you link your ideas and analyse (i.e. 'However', 'Furthermore', 'Also', 'As a result', 'Consequently') you are answering the question.
3. Read each of the paragraphs you have written before writing the next. Check that ideas are clearly stated, and that each paragraph answers the essay question.
4. The selection of quotations is probably the most important aspect of your response. If the quotations you use are not related to the question, then your explanations and analysis of them will not be either.
5. The final stanza of a poem is crucial as this is where the poet emphasises her/his message and attitude. This part should not be ignored. Weaker answers often neglect to comment on the final stanzas of a poem.
6. Keep your language specific and direct. Do not waste words. All of your response should help you to address AO1–AO4. Remember, you are getting marks for showing the examiner that you can understand, appreciate and analyse how the writer is using language to create a variety of effects.

7. You may want to comment on how the structure of a poem helps to create effects upon the reader. If you do, make sure that this is relevant to the questions and avoid generalisations.
8. A conclusion should be relevant and should summarise your personal response to the task and text. It does not need to repeat the points that you have already made.
9. Remember, these are set text poems. Therefore, your answer must show an awareness of the poet's intended meanings and messages/attitudes as you answer the question.

Section 6: Revision

This advice will help you revise and prepare for the examinations. It is divided into general advice for all papers and more specific advice for Paper 1, Paper 2, Paper 3 and Paper 4.

Use the tick boxes to keep a record of what you have done, what you plan to do or what you understand.

General advice

Before the examination

Find out when the examinations are and plan your revision. Create a revision timetable and divide it into sections to cover each topic.

Remind yourself about long each paper is, how many questions you have to answer, how many marks there are for each question, and work out how long you have for each question.

Use this guide to remind you of the choices you have on each paper.

Know the meaning of the command words used in questions. Look at past examination papers, highlight the command words and check what they mean.

Make revision notes. Try different styles of notes: e.g. bullets, mind maps, timelines, quotations lists.

Work for short periods, and then have a break. Revise small sections of texts at a time.

Have a look at past questions so that you are clear of what to expect in an examination.

Look at the band descriptors of the mark scheme to help you to understand how marks are awarded.

In the examination

Read the instructions carefully and answer the right number of questions.

Plan your time according to the marks for each question. For example, spend 5 minutes of your 45 minutes for each set text question annotating poems / extracts or by writing a brief plan. For the Unseen paper, spend 20 of the 75 minutes reading the question paper and planning your answer. Careful planning leads to clear, focused and logically-structured answers.

Always identify the command words and other key words of questions by highlighting or underlining them.

Answer the question. Do not try to cram into your answer all you know; select only what is needed to answer the question. Quality of response is more important than long rambling and repetitive answers.

Make sure your writing is clear and easy to read. It is no good writing a brilliant answer if the examiner cannot read it!

Paper 1 advice

Section A: Poetry

Read set poems again.

On a copy of the poem, draw lines to indicate the different sections of the poem. These sections will not necessarily be the same as stanzas. A new section might begin in the middle of a line.

On the copy of the poem, highlight key words, phrases and sounds. Make concise notes on the effects the poet creates.

Go through past essays and add the essay titles to the relevant poems and think how you would answer these questions now. Draw mind maps to help you gather ideas.

Search for readings of the poem on the internet and listen to the words as you read the poem.

Make your own recordings of poems. You could work on this with friends.

Section B: Prose passage-based questions

List past extract questions. Test how well you know the text by summarising what happens immediately before and after the extracts. Then check by looking at the text.

Highlight key words and phrases from these extracts and think how you would answer these questions now. Draw mind maps to help you gather ideas.

Select an extract of your own choice and devise an exam-style question to go with it. Highlight key words and phrases. Write a brief plan of how you would answer your question.

Repeat this step three times, using extracts from different parts of the novel (or from different short stories if you are studying the Cambridge anthology of short stories).

Section B: Prose essay questions

Make lists of quotations together with brief comments on the writer's use of language for each main:

- character
- theme
- setting.

Look at exam practice questions you have done in lessons or for homework. Draw mind maps or bullet point lists to plan how you would attempt these questions now.

Devise similar questions on other characters, themes or settings. Write plans for how you might answer these questions. List the quotations you would use to support your answers.

Papers 2 and 3 advice

The advice for revising extract questions and essay questions for drama texts is the same for both Paper 2 and Paper 3. Make sure you are clear about the requirements of the paper you are taking.

Drama passage-based questions

List past extract questions. Test how well you know the text by summarising what happens immediately before and after the extracts. Then check by looking at the text.

Highlight key words and phrases from these extracts and think how you would answer these questions now. Draw mind maps to help you gather ideas.

Select an extract of your own choice and devise an exam-style question to go with it. Highlight key words and phrases. Write a brief plan of how you would answer your question.

Repeat this step three times, using extracts from different parts of the play.

Use internet clips of these scenes from the play to help you appreciate how they can be performed by actors.

Drama essay questions

Make lists of quotations together with brief comments on the writer's use of language for each main:

- character
- theme
- setting.

Look at exam practice questions you have done in lessons or for homework. Draw mind maps or bullet point lists to plan how you would attempt these questions now.

Devise similar questions on other characters, themes or settings. Write plans for how you might answer these questions.

Paper 4 advice

Poetry option

Ask your teacher for a past Unseen Poetry question.

Spend 20 minutes highlighting the key words of the question and the words and phrases in the poem that you might write about in your answer.

Then annotate the poem, making concise comments about the effects of the words and phrases you highlighted. Next write a brief paragraph plan.

Mark the different sections of the poem by drawing a line across the page – and consider how the writer uses structure to communicate their ideas. Are there any obvious turning-points?

Think carefully about the tone of the speaker's voice. Are there any shifts in tone?

Spend 50 minutes writing your answer. Begin with a brief introduction to the essay that provides an overview of the poem at the same time as addressing the question.

Spend 5 minutes checking your answer.

Ask a friend to tick all relevant points and quotations. Use the official marking grid to arrive at a mark for your answer.

Prose option

Ask your teacher for a past Unseen Prose question.

Spend 20 minutes highlighting the key words of the question and the words and phrases in the extract that you might write about in your answer.

Then annotate the extract, making concise comments about the effects of the words and phrases you highlighted. Next write a brief paragraph plan.

Mark the different sections of the extract– and consider how the writer uses structure to communicate their ideas. Are there any obvious turning-points?

Make concise note about the writer's use of description, narration and direct speech – and how these elements contribute to the impact of the whole extract.

Spend 50 minutes writing your answer. Begin with a brief introduction to the essay that provides an overview of the extract at the same time as addressing the question.

Spend 5 minutes checking your answer.

Ask a friend to tick all relevant points and quotations. Use the official marking grid to arrive at a mark for your answer.

Revision checklists

In the next part of this guide we have provided some revision checklists. These include information from the syllabus that you should revise. They don't contain all the detailed knowledge you need to know, just an overview. For more detail see the syllabus and talk to your teacher.

The table headings are explained below:

Question type	What I need to do	R	A	G	Comments
		<p>You can use the tick boxes to show when you have revised an item and how confident you feel about it.</p> <p>R = RED means you are really unsure and lack confidence; you might want to focus your revision here and possibly talk to your teacher for help</p> <p>A = AMBER means you are reasonably confident but need some extra practice</p> <p>G = GREEN means you are very confident.</p> <p>As your revision progresses, you can concentrate on the RED and AMBER items in order to turn them into GREEN items. You might find it helpful to highlight each topic in red, orange or green to help you prioritise.</p>			<p>You can use the 'Comments' column to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • add more information about the details for each point • include a reference to a useful resource • add learning aids such as rhymes, poems or word play • highlight areas of difficulty or things that you need to talk to your teacher about.

Note: the tables below cannot contain absolutely everything you need to know, but it does use examples wherever it can.

Paper 1 Poetry and Prose

Question type	What I need to do	R	A	G	Comments
Poetry	On a copy of each poem, draw lines to indicate the different sections of the poem. These sections will not necessarily be the same as stanzas. A new section might begin in the middle of a line.				
	On the copy of each poem, highlight key words, phrases and sounds. Make concise notes on the effects the poet creates.				
	Go through past essays and add the essay titles to the relevant poems and think how you would answer these questions now. Draw mind maps to help you gather ideas.				
	Search for readings of the poem on the internet and listen to the words as you read the poem.				
	Make your own recordings of poems. You could work on this with friends.				
Prose passage-based	List past extract questions. Test how well you know the text by summarising what happens immediately before and after the extracts. Then check by looking at the text.				
	Highlight key words and phrases from these extracts and think how you would answer these questions now. Draw mind maps to help you gather ideas.				
	Select an extract of your own choice and devise an exam-style question to go with it. Highlight key words and phrases. Write a brief plan of how you would answer your question. Repeat this step three times, using extracts from different parts of the novel (or from different short stories if you are studying the Cambridge anthology of short stories).				

Question type	What I need to do	R	A	G	Comments
Prose essays	Make lists of quotations together with brief comments on the writer's use of language for each main: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • character • theme • setting. 				
	Look at exam practice questions you have done in lessons or for homework. Draw mind maps or bullet point lists to plan how you would attempt these questions now.				
	Devise similar questions on other characters, themes or settings. Write plans for how you might answer these questions. List the quotations you would use to support your answers.				

Paper 2 and Paper 3 Drama

Question type	What I need to do	R	A	G	Comments
Drama passage-based	List past extract questions. Test how well you know the text by summarising what happens immediately before and after the extracts. Then check by looking at the text.				
	Highlight key words and phrases from these extracts and think how you would answer these questions now. Draw mind maps to help you gather ideas.				
	Select an extract of your own choice and devise an exam-style question to go with it. Highlight key words and phrases. Write a brief plan of how you would answer your question. Repeat this step three times, using extracts from different parts of the play.				
	Use internet clips of these scenes from the play to help you appreciate how they can be performed by actors.				
Drama essay	Make lists of quotations together with brief comments on the writer's use of language for each main: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • character • theme • setting. 				
	Look at exam practice questions you have done in lessons or for homework. Draw mind maps or bullet point lists to plan how you would attempt these questions now.				
	Devise similar questions on other characters, themes or settings. Write plans for how you might answer these questions.				

Paper 4 Unseen

Question type	What I need to do	R	A	G	Comments
Unseen Poetry	Ask your teacher for a past Unseen Poetry question.				
	<p>Spend 20 minutes highlighting the key words of the question and the words and phrases in the poem that you might write about in your answer.</p> <p>Then annotate the poem, making concise comments about the effects of the words and phrases you highlighted. Next write a brief paragraph plan.</p> <p>Mark the different sections of the poem by drawing a line across the page – and consider how the writer uses structure to communicate their ideas. Are there any obvious turning-points?</p> <p>Think carefully about the tone of the speaker's voice. Are there any shifts in tone?</p>				
	Spend 50 minutes writing your answer. Begin with a brief introduction to the essay that provides an overview of the poem at the same time as addressing the question.				
	Spend 5 minutes checking your answer.				
	Ask a friend to tick all relevant points and quotations. Use the official marking grid to arrive at a mark for your answer.				

Question type	What I need to do	R	A	G	Comments
Unseen Prose	Ask your teacher for a past Unseen Prose question.				
	<p>Spend 20 minutes highlighting the key words of the question and the words and phrases in the extract that you might write about in your answer.</p> <p>Then annotate the extract, making concise comments about the effects of the words and phrases you highlighted. Next write a brief paragraph plan.</p> <p>Mark the different sections of the extract– and consider how the writer uses structure to communicate their ideas. Are there any obvious turning-points?</p> <p>Think carefully about the writer's use of description, narration and direct speech – and how these elements contribute to the impact of the whole extract.</p>				
	Spend 50 minutes writing your answer. Begin with a brief introduction to the essay that provides an overview of the extract at the same time as addressing the question.				
	Spend 5 minutes checking your answer.				
	Ask a friend to tick all relevant points and quotations. Use the official marking grid to arrive at a mark for your answer.				

Section 7: Useful websites

The websites listed below are useful resources to help you study for your Cambridge O Level Literature in English course. They can support your detailed study of texts, but they cannot replace it.

www.poetryarchive.org/study

The Poetry Archive website has an extensive range of poems, including poems from set texts. One of the key benefits of this website is listening to poets reading their own work. The website also provides a glossary of key terms used when studying poetry.

www.cliffsnotes.com/literature

The Cliffs Notes literature website provides useful information about the plot, characters and main ideas of literature texts – as well as quizzes to test just how well you know your texts. The notes on the website are a useful starting-point for study; they are not, however, a substitute for the hard work of developing your own informed personal response to your set texts.

www.bbc.co.uk/education/topics/zwws39q

The BBC Bitesize Literature website contains useful resources on some of the more popular texts, such as these resources on Shakespeare's Macbeth.

<http://youtube.com>

YouTube contains many clips from filmed adaptations of plays and novels. These can help you to evaluate how others (e.g. directors, actors) have interpreted key roles and moments in texts.

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