

Part 1

Introduction



Unit 1

How to get the most from this coursebook

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1.1 Why study literature?

Literature, like travel, broadens the mind, particularly when the writers you are studying come from countries around the world. The main criteria for selecting **texts** for Cambridge Literature in English (both IGCSE and O Level) are that they should be well written (and therefore worth studying) and be written in English. One of the principal aims of the course is for you to enjoy the experience of reading and studying literature.



KEY TERM

Text: when used in this coursebook, refers to a poem, a short story, a novel or a play. When studying English Language, you might work on different non-literary types of text, such as letters and newspaper articles.

1.2 How will this coursebook help you?

This coursebook is designed to be used in class or to be read as part of your individual private study. Its purpose is to help you develop the skills necessary for a course in literature.

This book supports Cambridge IGCSE and O Level Literature in English and Cambridge IGCSE World Literature. The skills covered in this coursebook are common to each syllabus, but you should ask your teacher or refer to the relevant syllabus for details of the specific assessment objectives and coursework requirements.

This coursebook aims to reduce the ‘fear factor’ associated with learning new skills. It will focus on the skills you need to develop your confidence in, giving informed personal responses to the texts you read. It will also help you to prepare for your assessment at the end of your course.

1.3 Structure of the coursebook

The coursebook is divided into parts and units.

Part 1: Introduction

Unit 1: How to get the most from this coursebook

This introductory unit explains how the coursebook will help you during your literature course.

Unit 2: Approaching your course

This unit gives an introduction to the assessment objectives used in your course. You will find it helpful to familiarise yourself with these objectives, and then to refer back to them as you progress through the course.

Part 2: Building your skills: Poetry

This is the first main study section in the *Building your skills* part of the coursebook. It is best for you to read and work through the units in this section before reading Part 3: *Building your skills: Prose* and Part 4: *Building your skills: Drama*. One reason for this is that poems are generally much shorter than plays or novels, and even short stories. By studying the way in which poets write, you will be able to explore a complete text, and see how poets begin, develop and end their poems. Part 2 will also introduce skills and learning strategies which you will go on to develop further in subsequent parts.

While this part is not intended as an anthology, there is nonetheless a wide variety of poetry for you to read and explore. The activities suggested, and the questions asked, are designed to develop your skills of analysis over the duration of the course. The more poetry you read, the more competent you will become at analysing poems closely. The poems chosen are the work of a variety of authors from different centuries and from different continents.

Part 3: Building your skills: Prose

Except for one complete short story in Unit 11, the ‘texts’ for study in this part are extracts from longer prose works. They have been chosen to enable you to develop the skills you will need for reading and exploring the detail of longer prose works.

The activities and questions in this part will focus on how writers begin their novels or stories, and how they establish the setting and mood, as well as how they develop characters and themes.

As with Part 2, the more you read, the more you will develop your skills of analysis.

The questions will help you to develop appropriate vocabulary to use when analysing and writing about prose texts, and methods for appreciating the ways in which writers present their material.

Your study of the complete short story in Unit 11 will help you to consider the ways in which writers not only begin and develop stories, but also bring them to a conclusion.

The chosen prose extracts are by female and male authors, were written over the last two centuries and are from different parts of the world.

Part 4: Building your skills: Drama

The extracts in Part 4 are from plays by Shakespeare, written over 400 years ago, and also from plays written during the last century, reflecting the kinds of plays to be found across the Literature in English syllabuses.

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The activities and questions in this part will encourage you to visualise the drama texts as plays that are intended for performance in the theatre. The extracts are designed to cover a range of key aspects that are important when studying drama texts, the ways in which dramatists begin their plays and establish settings and mood, as well as the ways they present characters and themes.

Part 5: Consolidating your writing skills

The two units in Part 5 – Unit 16: *Critical writing* and Unit 17: *A closer look at essay technique* – are designed to help you consolidate your writing skills. It is essential that you devote enough time over the duration of the course to developing your writing skills.

Part 6: Approaching assessment

This section of the coursebook will help you to prepare for assessment. There are three units.

Unit 18: Approaching set texts

This unit builds on what you will have learned in the parts on responding to poetry (Part 2), prose (Part 3) and drama (Part 4), and the consolidating of your writing skills. The unit gives advice on how to revise your set texts effectively. Guidance is also provided on how to prepare for different types of question that you may encounter in relation to prose, poetry and drama.

Unit 19: Approaching unseen poems and prose extracts

This unit builds on the skills you will have already practised in Parts 2 and 3 on responding to poetry and prose, and also in Part 5: *Consolidating your writing skills*.

This unit is particularly relevant for IGCSE students taking the Unseen Paper option, but the strategies it discusses will be useful for all students when approaching new texts.

This unit aims to reassure you by reminding you that you will have developed and practised the necessary skills for approaching unseen texts in the *Building your skills* parts of the coursebook.

In addition, this unit will suggest useful strategies for how to approach poems and prose extracts; it will also give you practice in answering examination-style questions.

Unit 20: Preparing for the Coursework portfolio

The skills for responding to poetry, prose and drama texts are developed in Parts 2–4, and these skills are relevant for the texts you will study if you are a Cambridge IGCSE Literature in English student doing the Coursework component.

This unit provides clear guidance about what you need to do for Coursework and suggests effective strategies for planning and producing successful Coursework assignments.

The coursework/portfolio requirements for IGCSE World Literature students are different, so please check with your teacher or refer to the syllabus.

1.4 Active learning

This coursebook will help you to develop effective learning strategies, and to develop and practise the skills necessary for your success in Cambridge IGCSE or O Level Literature. It will also encourage you to take responsibility for your own learning. The following are some of the ways in which you can do this:

- 1 Read texts, such as the drama and prose texts, before lessons, if you can.
- 2 Begin your revision of texts straight away. After lessons, find time when you can re-read closely the sections of texts you have covered in class. Go over those sections of texts that you found challenging on first reading.

Unit 1: How to get the most from this coursebook

- 3 Read with a dictionary available nearby. This can be in print or online. Meanings of words are not going to become clearer unless you use a dictionary.
- 4 Be an active reader and make notes – lots of them! Make notes on paper or on screen. Then add to your notes as you re-read them. You might find that a reading log or a computer ‘scrapbook’ is a very useful addition to your learning.
- 5 **Annotate** copies of poems or pages from longer texts. This can be very helpful, particularly if you annotate key words to show how the writers achieve their effects. For this reason, it is helpful to have different coloured pens, or highlighter pens, to differentiate between various types of note. A useful starting point is to use one colour for notes about content, and another colour for key words which illustrate a writer’s choice of language.
- 6 Read up on set texts, using the internet or the library for research. Study guides can be helpful early on in providing an overview of the plot or characters. Remember, however, that such guides should not be used as a substitute for your own *informed* personal response to texts.
- 7 Read texts aloud. This is likely to be done in lessons, and it is more easily done with poems and plays than long novels. However, there is no reason why you should not read aloud key extracts from the novels you are studying. If you have time, you could even record your reading of some of your poems or key extracts from drama and prose texts. This would certainly be an excellent way to revise.



KEY TERM

Annotate: to make notes providing *brief* explanations or comments.



Unit 2

Approaching your course

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Learning outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be familiar with:

- which course you are taking and how to approach it
- the course's assessment objectives.

2.1 Assessment structure

Your teacher will inform you which syllabus you are following: Cambridge IGCSE Literature in English, O Level Literature in English or IGCSE World Literature.

- For **IGCSE Literature in English**, you will take one of three routes through the assessment.
- For **O Level Literature in English**, you will all follow the same route.
- For **IGCSE World Literature**, you will all follow the same route.

More information about the assessment structure of your course is set out in the appendix at the end of this book.

2.2 Assessment objectives

All subjects have their own specific assessment objectives (AOs), which list the necessary skills that you should develop during your course. The assessment objectives for Cambridge IGCSE Literature in English, for O Level Literature in English and for IGCSE World Literature are listed in separate tables below, together with a detailed explanation of what they mean in practice.

Cambridge IGCSE Literature in English

Assessment objective (AO)	What it means for you
<p>AO 1</p> <p>Show detailed knowledge of the content of literary texts in the three main forms (drama, poetry and prose), supported by reference to the text.</p>	<p>You need to have a thorough grasp of the detail of the texts you study.</p> <p>The work you do throughout the course will help you to get to grips with the relevant detail, but you must be prepared to re-read your set texts carefully.</p> <p>You need to support your responses by using evidence from the text, in the form of references (such as concise quotations).</p>
<p>AO 2</p> <p>Understand the meanings of literary texts and their contexts, and explore texts beyond surface meanings to show deeper awareness of ideas and attitudes.</p>	<p>Your close reading of texts, together with written analysis, throughout the course will strengthen your appreciation of the themes and ideas.</p> <p>You will need to go beyond simply re-telling the story, describing the characters or explaining the content of a text.</p> <p>The skills covered in this coursebook will help you to look for deeper meanings and to consider alternative interpretations.</p> <p>From your reading, you will discover something about the context of the texts you read. Your main job, however, is to explore the text, not write out lots of background material for the sake of it.</p>
<p>AO 3</p> <p>Recognise and appreciate ways in which writers use language, structure and form to create and shape meanings and effects.</p>	<p>Most questions that you will encounter in your studies will have an explicit focus on the techniques writers use to convey their subject matter. In their plays, poems, short stories and novels, writers make careful choices about language and structure to achieve the particular effects they desire. The <i>Building your skills</i> Parts 2–4 for poetry, prose and drama will help you to appreciate how writers set out to produce certain responses in readers: perhaps, for example, to shock or amuse us.</p> <p>This assessment objective tests your powers of close reading and analysis. You will learn how to make brief references to the text and comment precisely on the effects of the key words you quote.</p>

Cambridge IGCSE and O Level Literature in English

Assessment objective (AO)	What it means for you
<p>AO 4</p> <p>Communicate a sensitive and informed personal response to literary texts.</p>	<p>In this course, you are always expected to give <i>your</i> genuine and considered response to the question and to answer the question that has been asked rather than one you wish had been asked.</p> <p>This is not a subject where answers can be learned, or ‘model’ answers given. You certainly should not expect your teacher to provide you with ready-made views and opinions.</p> <p>An <i>informed</i> personal response means that you must provide detailed evidence from the text to support <i>your</i> views.</p>

Cambridge O Level Literature in English

Assessment objective (AO)	What it means for you
<p>AO 1</p> <p>Show detailed knowledge of the content of literary texts.</p>	<p>You need to have a thorough grasp of the detail of the texts you study.</p> <p>The work you do throughout the course will help you to get to grips with the relevant detail, but you must be prepared to re-read your set texts carefully.</p> <p>You need to support your responses by using evidence from the text, in the form of references (such as concise quotations).</p>
<p>AO 2</p> <p>Understand the ways literary texts can be interpreted from surface level to deeper awareness of ideas and attitudes and their contexts.</p>	<p>Your close reading of texts, together with written analysis, throughout the course will strengthen your appreciation of the ideas and attitudes present in texts.</p> <p>You will need to go beyond simply re-telling the story, describing the characters or explaining the content of a text.</p> <p>The skills covered in this coursebook will help you to look for deeper meanings and to consider alternative interpretations.</p> <p>From your reading, you will discover something about the context of the texts you read. Your main job is to explore the text, not write out lots of background material for the sake of it.</p>
<p>AO3</p> <p>Recognise and appreciate ways in which writers use language.</p>	<p>This assessment objective tests your powers of close reading and analysis of the words writers use in creating settings, presenting characters and developing ideas.</p> <p>To comment effectively on writers’ use of language, you will need to make brief references to the text and analyse precisely the effects of the key words you quote.</p>

Assessment objective (AO)	What it means for you
<p>AO 4</p> <p>Recognise and appreciate ways in which writers achieve their effects (e.g. structure, plot, characterisation, dramatic tension, imagery, rhythm, setting and mood).</p>	<p>Most questions you will encounter in the course of your studies will focus explicitly on the techniques writers use to convey their subject-matter. In their plays, poems, short stories and novels, writers make careful choices about structure, plot, characterisation, etc., to achieve the particular effects they desire.</p> <p>The <i>Building your skills</i> Parts 2–4 for poetry, prose and drama will help you to appreciate how writers set out to produce certain responses in readers, perhaps, for example, to shock or amuse us.</p>
<p>AO 5</p> <p>Communicate a sensitive and informed personal response to what is read.</p>	<p>In this course, you are always expected to give <i>your</i> genuine and considered response to the question you are asked, and to answer the question that has been asked rather than one you wish had been asked.</p> <p>This is not a subject where answers can be learned, or ‘model’ answers given. You certainly should not expect your teacher to provide you with ready-made views and opinions.</p> <p>An <i>informed</i> personal response means that you must provide detailed evidence from the text to support <i>your</i> views.</p>

Cambridge IGCSE World Literature

Assessment objective (AO)	What it means for you
<p>AO 1</p> <p>Detailed knowledge of the content and form of literary texts drawn from different countries and cultures.</p>	<p>You need to have a thorough grasp of the detail of the texts you study.</p> <p>The work you do throughout the course will help you to get to grips with the relevant detail, but you must be prepared to re-read your set texts carefully.</p> <p>You need to support your responses by using evidence from the text, in the form of references (such as concise quotations).</p>
<p>AO 2</p> <p>Engagement with writers’ ideas and treatment of themes, and appreciation of how texts relate to wider contexts.</p>	<p>Your close reading of texts, together with written analysis, throughout the course will strengthen your appreciation of the ideas and attitudes present in texts.</p> <p>You will need to go beyond simply re-telling the story, describing the characters or explaining the content of a text.</p> <p>The skills covered in this coursebook will help you to look for deeper meanings and to consider alternative interpretations.</p> <p>From your reading, you will discover something about the context of the texts you read. Your main job, however, is to explore the text, not write out lots of background material for the sake of it.</p>

Cambridge IGCSE and O Level Literature in English

Assessment objective (AO)	What it means for you
AO 3 Recognition and appreciation of how writers create and shape meanings and effects.	This assessment objective tests your powers of close reading and analysis of the words writers use in creating settings, presenting characters and developing ideas. To comment effectively on writers' use of language, you will need to make brief references to the text and analyse precisely the effects of the key words you quote.
AO 4 Empathy, through re-creation of a character's voice and thoughts.	You will have the opportunity to write an empathic response for one of your three coursework assessments for the Portfolio. You will need to select from a novel or a play a key character at a specific moment to construct a recognisable voice for them. This assessment will require you to think carefully about your chosen character's role within the text. You should consider carefully the thoughts the character is likely to have at your chosen moment and the voice they would use to express these thoughts.

2.3 Developing your skills over the course

In studying literature, you will discover that it takes time to progress. Your skills will develop, along with your confidence, over the course. This is an obvious point to make, but one that is easily forgotten by students if one of their first pieces of work receives disappointing feedback. It is perhaps easier to progress more quickly in subjects other than literature.

However, if you work conscientiously in the ways that this coursebook recommends, then you should acquire a detailed knowledge of texts you study and gain the necessary skills for approaching many different types of question.

We hope you will find much to enjoy in your study of literature.