



CAMBRIDGE
International Education

Syllabus

Cambridge International AS Level Language and Literature in English 8695

Use this syllabus for exams in 2027 and 2028.
Exams are available in the June and November series.



Version 1

For the purposes of screen readers, any mention in this document of Cambridge IGCSE refers to Cambridge International General Certificate of Secondary Education.

Why choose Cambridge?

We work with schools worldwide to build an education that shapes knowledge, understanding and skills. Together, we give learners the confidence they need to thrive and make a positive impact in a changing world.

As part of the University of Cambridge, we offer a globally trusted and flexible framework for education from age 3 to 19, informed by research, experience, and listening to educators.

With recognised qualifications, high-quality resources, comprehensive support and valuable insights, we help schools prepare every student for the opportunities and challenges ahead.

Qualifications that are recognised and valued worldwide

From the world's top-ranked universities to local higher education institutions, Cambridge qualifications open doors to a world of opportunities.

Setting a global standard

With over 160 years of experience in delivering fair, valid and reliable assessments to students worldwide, we offer a global, recognised performance standard for international education.

Your path, your way

Schools can adapt our curriculum, high-quality teaching and learning resources and flexible assessments to their local context. Our aligned offer helps Cambridge schools support every learner to reach their potential and thrive.

Learning with lasting impact

Cambridge learners build subject knowledge and conceptual understanding, and develop a broad range of skills, learning habits and attributes to help make them ready for the world.

Improving learning outcomes through data-led insight and action

Our trusted baseline and diagnostic assessments, together with our insights and evaluation service, help schools turn data into knowledge and actionable insights, to inform teaching decisions and improve learner outcomes.

Bringing together a community of experts

We bring together the collective knowledge of experts and our diverse community of educators worldwide, supporting them to learn from one another and share ideas and information.

Tackling the climate crisis together

We believe that education is key to tackling the climate crisis. Together with Cambridge schools, we can empower young people with the skills and knowledge to take action on climate change, helping them be ready for the world.

School feedback: 'We think the Cambridge curriculum is superb preparation for university.'

Feedback from: Christoph Guttentag, Dean of Undergraduate Admissions, Duke University, USA

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Contents

Why choose Cambridge?	2
1 Why choose this syllabus?	4
2 Syllabus overview	9
Aims	9
Content overview	10
Assessment overview	11
Assessment objectives	12
3 Subject content	13
Paper 1 – Writing	13
Paper 2 – Drama, Poetry and Prose	15
Set texts for examination in 2027	15
Set poems and stories for examination in 2027	16
Set texts for examination in 2028	21
Set poems and stories for examination in 2028	22
Editions of set texts used for setting passages in the examination	27
4 Details of the assessment	28
Paper 1 – Writing	28
Paper 2 – Drama, Poetry and Prose	29
Command words	30
5 What else you need to know	31
Before you start	31
Making entries	32
Accessibility and equality	32
After the exam	33
How students, teachers and higher education can use the grades	34
Changes to this syllabus for 2027 and 2028	35

Important: Changes to this syllabus

For information about changes to this syllabus for 2027 and 2028, go to page 33.



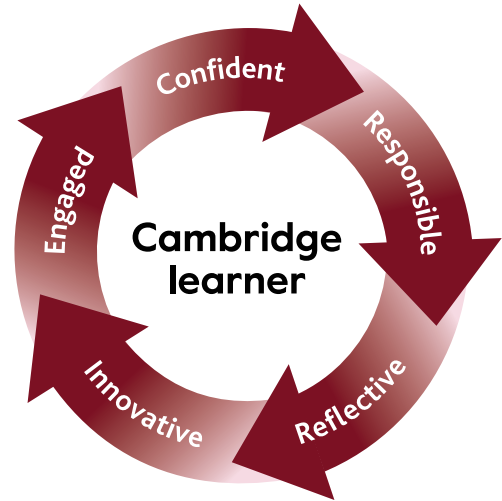
1 Why choose this syllabus?

Key benefits

The best motivation for a student is a real passion for the subject they are learning. Cambridge International AS & A Level give schools flexibility to offer a broad and balanced curriculum with a choice of over 50 subjects. Students can select the subjects they love and that they are best at, enabling them to reach their potential and thrive.

Following a Cambridge International AS & A Level programme helps students develop abilities which universities value highly, including:

- a deep subject knowledge
- conceptual understanding and higher-level thinking skills
- presenting ordered and coherent arguments
- independent learning and research.



Cambridge International AS Level Language and Literature in English develops a set of transferable skills. These include critical analysis, constructing arguments, presenting knowledge and understanding, and writing English in a balanced, articulate and fluent manner. Learners of Language and Literature in English will find that the skills needed will support them in a wide range of subjects and real-world situations.

Our approach in Cambridge International AS Level Language and Literature in English supports the development of learners who are:

confident, exploring texts and ideas with self-assurance, intellectual freedom and personal insight

responsible, committing to their learning and developing approaches to critical analysis to better understand ideas of culture, context and the community

reflective, developing a keen sense of themselves as students of language and literature in a range of ever-changing contexts

innovative, approaching tasks and texts with a combination of creative, original and flexible thinking

engaged, recognising and interrogating the roles language and literature play in matters of personal, social and global significance, and being prepared to apply this learning beyond the classroom.

School feedback: ‘Cambridge students develop a deep understanding of subjects and independent thinking skills.’

Feedback from: Principal, Rockledge High School, USA

Key concepts

Key concepts are essential ideas that help students develop a deep understanding of their subject and make links between different aspects. Key concepts may open up new ways of thinking about, understanding or interpreting the important things to be learned.

Good teaching and learning will incorporate and reinforce a subject's key concepts to help students gain:

- a greater depth as well as breadth of subject knowledge
- confidence, especially in applying knowledge and skills in new situations
- the vocabulary to discuss their subject conceptually and show how different aspects link together
- a level of mastery of their subject to help them enter higher education.

Carefully introducing and developing key concepts at the right time will help to underpin the teaching. You may identify additional key concepts which will also enrich teaching and learning.

In considering aspects of **English Language in Paper 1** of this syllabus, the key concepts for Cambridge International AS Level Language and Literature in English are:

- **Text and context**

A text can be defined as a single, coherent unit of language, from the briefest spoken utterance to a book published across several volumes. However, no text exists without context; students of English language must always consider how a text's meaning is informed by the circumstances not only of its production, but also of its communication and reception.

- **Meaning and style**

The study of English language involves developing a range of strategies for exploring the complex ways in which different linguistic elements come together to create meaning. Whether producing their own texts or analysing texts produced by others, students of English language must consider how choices regarding form, structure and language also interact to create a distinctive style.

- **Audience**

Students of English language must learn to identify and analyse the strategies writers use to communicate with their intended audience(s). Likewise, they must be able to predict, recognise and analyse the various responses these strategies might elicit.

- **Creativity**

Whether writing artfully for a specified purpose and audience, reading deeply between the lines of a challenging text, or developing strategies for acquiring the language in the first place, users of the English language must demonstrate creativity in a range of forms and contexts.

In considering aspects of **Literature in English** in **Paper 2** of this syllabus, the key concepts for Cambridge International AS Level Language and Literature in English are:

- **Language**
Exploring the variety and use of language in literary texts. Identifying literary techniques and explaining how their use contributes to a reader's analysis and understanding of the text.
- **Form**
Considering the ways in which writers use – or depart from – conventions of literary forms of prose, poetry and drama and how those inform meaning and effects.
- **Structure**
When analysed in reading: the organisation of a text or passage, its shape and development and how this contributes to the readers' understanding of its meaning and effects.
When used in writing: the construction of a relevant and supported argument appropriate to the question.
- **Genre**
Exploring the characteristics of different text types: for example, tragedy, comedy and satire.
- **Context**
Exploring the relationship between a text and its historical, social and cultural backgrounds and the ways in which this can illuminate the reading of a text.
- **Style**
Analysing the writer's variety and use of language and style in different forms, genres and periods, and how it contributes to the meanings and effects for different audiences and readerships.
- **Interpretation**
Evaluating and explaining different ideas within a text.

Qualifications that are recognised and valued worldwide

Cambridge qualifications prepare and equip learners with the skills they need to thrive at university and beyond. The world's best higher education institutions recognise our qualifications and value the critical thinking skills, independent research abilities and deep subject knowledge that Cambridge learners bring.

We continually work with universities and colleges in every part of the world to ensure that they understand and accept our qualifications. More than 2220 universities in over 90 countries formally recognise Cambridge qualifications, with many more accepting our qualifications on application.

UK ENIC, the national agency in the UK for the recognition and comparison of international qualifications and skills, has carried out an independent benchmarking study of Cambridge International AS & A Level and found it to be comparable to the standard of AS & A Level in the UK. This means students can be confident that their Cambridge International AS & A Level qualifications are accepted as equivalent, grade for grade, to UK AS & A Levels by leading universities worldwide.

A choice of assessment routes

Cambridge International AS & A Level offers a choice of assessment routes with staged assessment available in many subjects: Cambridge International AS Level can be offered as a standalone qualification or as part of a progression to Cambridge International A Level.

Depending on local university entrance requirements, students may be able to use it to progress directly to university courses in Language and Literature in English or some other subjects. It is also suitable as part of a course of general education.

Visit www.cambridgeinternational.org/recognition-search/ and university websites for the most up-to-date higher education entry requirements.

Learn more: www.cambridgeinternational.org/recognition

Supporting teachers

We believe education works best when teaching and learning are closely aligned to the curriculum, resources and assessment. Our high-quality teaching support helps to maximise teaching time and enables teachers to engage learners of all backgrounds and abilities.

We aim to provide the following support for each Cambridge qualification:

- Syllabus
- Specimen question papers and mark schemes
- Specimen paper answers
- Schemes of Work
- Example candidate responses
- Past papers and mark schemes
- Principal examiner reports for teachers

These resources are available on the School Support Hub at www.cambridgeinternational.org/support, our secure online site for Cambridge teachers. Your exams officer can provide you with a login.

Additional teaching & learning resources are also available for many syllabuses and vary according to the nature of the subject and the structure of the assessment of each syllabus. These can include ready-built lesson materials, digital resources and multimedia for the classroom and homework, guidance on assessment and much more. Beyond the resources available on the Schools Support Hub, a wide range of endorsed textbooks and associated teaching and learning support are available from Cambridge at www.cambridge.org/education and from other publishers. Resources vary according to the nature of the subject and the structure of the assessment of each syllabus.

You can also contact our global Cambridge community or talk to a senior examiner on our discussion forums.

Sign up for email notifications about changes to syllabuses, including new and revised products and services, at www.cambridgeinternational.org/syllabusupdates

Professional development

Find the next step on your professional development journey:

- **Introduction courses** – An introduction to Cambridge programmes and qualifications. For teachers who are new to Cambridge programmes or new to a specific syllabus.
- **Focus on Teaching courses** – These are for teachers who want to explore a specific area of teaching and learning within a syllabus or programme.
- **Focus on Assessment courses** – These are for teachers who want to understand the assessment of a syllabus in greater depth.
- **Marking workshops** – These workshops help you become more familiar with what examiners are looking for, and provide an opportunity to raise questions and share your experiences of the syllabus.
- **Enrichment Professional Development** – Transform your approach to teaching with our Enrichment workshops. Each workshop focuses on a specific area of teaching and learning practice.
- **Cambridge Professional Development Qualifications (PDQs)** – Practice-based programmes that transform professional learning for practicing teachers. Available at Certificate and Diploma level.

For more information visit www.cambridgeinternational.org/support-for-teachers

Supporting exams officers

We provide comprehensive support and guidance for all Cambridge exams officers. Find out more at: www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide



2 Syllabus overview

Aims

The aims describe the purposes of a course based on this syllabus.

The aims are to enable students to:

- enjoy the experience of studying English language and reading literature
- communicate effectively, accurately and appropriately in writing
- develop the interdependent skills of reading, analysis and communication
- develop an appreciation of texts in a range of forms and styles produced for a variety of audiences and from different periods and cultures
- build a firm foundation for further study of language and literature.

We are an education organisation and politically neutral. The contents of this syllabus, examination papers and associated materials do not endorse any political view. We endeavour to treat all aspects of the exam process neutrally.



Content overview

Cambridge International AS Language and Literature in English will provide learners with the opportunity to demonstrate their ability to produce writing to specific briefs and for given audiences. They will also gain further knowledge and understanding of international poetry, prose and drama.

In studying for the Language component of the syllabus, learners will be able to practise sustained, accurate, fluent and consistent writing. They will produce informed responses, appropriate to the specific form, style, context and audience.

Learners will study two texts in preparation for the Literature component. This will further develop their skills of analysis and interpretation and encourage a personal response to the texts studied. Learners will explore the conventions of genres of texts and the contexts in which works have been written, read and received.

These are highly transferable skills and can help learners in other subject areas, as well as equipping them for higher education and/or employment.

School feedback: ‘Cambridge International AS & A Levels prepare students well for university because they’ve learnt to go into a subject in considerable depth. There’s that ability to really understand the depth and richness and the detail of a subject. It’s a wonderful preparation for what they are going to face at university.’

Feedback from: US Higher Education Advisory Council

Assessment overview

Paper 1

Writing 2 hours
50 marks

Candidates answer **two** questions: one compulsory question from Section A, and one question from a choice of three in Section B.

Externally assessed
50% of the AS Level

Paper 2

Drama, Poetry and Prose 2 hours
50 marks

Candidates answer **two** questions, each from a different section.

Externally assessed
50% of the AS Level

Information on availability is in the **Before you start section**.

Candidates for Cambridge International AS Level Language and Literature in English take Paper 1 and Paper 2 in the same series.

Assessment objectives

The assessment objectives (AOs) for **Paper 1 Writing** are:

AO2

Write effectively, creatively, accurately and appropriately, for a range of audiences and purposes.

AO3

Analyse the ways in which writers' choices of form, structure and language produce meaning and style.

The assessment objectives (AOs) for **Paper 2 Drama, Poetry and Prose** are:

AO1

Respond with understanding to literary texts in a variety of forms, from different cultures; with an appreciation of relevant contexts that illuminate readings of the texts.

AO2

Analyse ways in which writers' choices of language, form and structure shape meanings and effects

AO3

Produce informed independent opinions and interpretations of literary texts.

AO4

Communicate a relevant, structured and supported response appropriate to literary study.

Weighting for assessment objectives

The approximate weightings allocated to each of the assessment objectives (AOs) are summarised below.

Assessment objectives as a percentage Paper 1 Writing

Assessment objective	Weighting in AS Level %
AO2	80
AO3	20
Total	100

Assessment objectives as a percentage Paper 2 Drama, Poetry and Prose

Assessment objective	Weighting in AS Level %
AO1	25
AO2	25
AO3	25
AO4	25
Total	100

3 Subject content

This syllabus gives you the flexibility to design a course that will interest, challenge and engage your learners. Where appropriate you are responsible for selecting resources and examples and texts to support your learners' study. These should be appropriate for the learners' age, cultural background and learning context as well as complying with your school policies and local legal requirements.

Paper 1 – Writing

In Paper 1, candidates are primarily assessed on skills and techniques related to writing.

Learners should explore and experiment with an extensive variety of genres, styles and contexts in their writing. In addition to refining their ability to express themselves with precision and clarity of purpose, learners should become increasingly reflective writers, capable of adapting the style of their writing to fit a diverse range of forms, audiences, purposes and contexts.

The examples listed in the content below are suggested rather than prescribed ways in which candidates can demonstrate knowledge and understanding. These examples are not exhaustive.

Knowledge and understanding

Candidates should be prepared to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the conventions of a wide range of written textual forms
- the linguistic elements and literary features of texts
- the significance of audience in both the design and reception of texts
- the ways in which genre, purpose and context contribute to the meaning of texts

Examples:

- advertisements, brochures, leaflets, editorials, news stories, articles, reviews, blogs, investigative journalism, letters, podcasts, (auto)biographies, travel writing, diaries, essays, scripted speech, narrative writing, and descriptive writing
- parts of speech / word classes, vocabulary, figurative language, phonology, morphology, rhetorical devices, voice, aspect, tense, modality, narrative perspective, word ordering and sentence structure, paragraph- and text-level structure, formality/informality of tone, pragmatics

Skills and techniques

Candidates should be prepared to demonstrate the following skills and techniques:

- writing for a specified audience and purpose, to fulfil the brief provided
- producing an appropriate structure for longer pieces of writing
- organising writing to achieve specific effects
- structuring paragraphs
- using a range of appropriate linguistic elements and literary features
- expressing ideas accurately and clearly at both sentence and word level
- reflecting upon and evaluating the qualities of their own writing, including aspects relating to its purpose, form and audience

Examples:

- Freytag's Pyramid in imaginative writing; dialectical structure in discursive writing; introductory, summary and evaluative sections in review writing
- withholding key information in imaginative writing; juxtaposing counterarguments in discursive writing; evidentiary logic in critical writing
- topic sentences, connectives, internal coherence, discourse markers
- imagery in descriptive writing; rhetorical devices in argumentative writing; evaluative lexis in critical writing

Paper 2 – Drama, Poetry and Prose

Set texts for examination in 2027

The set texts listed below are for examination in **2027**.

Set texts regularly rotate on the syllabus and may change from one year of examination to the next. Before you begin teaching, check the set text list for the year in which your candidates will take their examinations.

Learners study **two** set texts, each from a different section.

Candidates answer **two** questions in the examination, each from a different section of the question paper.

Section A Drama

Edward Albee	<i>Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?</i>
Aphra Behn	<i>The Rover</i>
Inua Ellams	<i>Barber Shop Chronicles</i>
William Shakespeare	<i>The Tempest</i>

Section B Poetry

Zaffar Kunial	Selected Poems from <i>England's Green</i>
Sylvia Plath	Selected Poems from <i>Ariel</i> (1965)
Christina Rossetti	Selected Poems from <i>Selected Poems</i>
<i>Songs of Ourselves, Volume 2</i>	Selected Poems (new selection for 2026, 2027 and 2028)

Section C Prose

<i>Stories of Ourselves, Volume 3</i>	Selected Stories (new selection from <i>Volume 3</i> for 2027 and 2028)
Evelyn Waugh	<i>A Handful of Dust</i>
Colson Whitehead	<i>The Underground Railroad</i>
Tara June Winch	<i>The Yield</i>

Set poems and stories for examination in 2027

Poems and stories for examination in 2027 are listed below.

Zaffar Kunial: Selected Poems from *England's Green* Paper 2, Section B Poetry

Title:	First Line:
<i>Foxglove Country</i>	Sometimes I like to hide in the word
<i>Forget-Me-Not</i>	A heart-note whispered into the ear of a mouse
<i>The Hedge</i>	This place is full of them. England. Britain.
<i>This in Land</i>	That way a butterfly lifts an edge of world
<i>England</i>	We all have lives that go on without us.
<i>Green</i>	Green she is when I find her. Or find her grave. A second
<i>Invasive</i>	Sweet chestnuts from the Romans, but this whole land, till
<i>Foregrounds</i>	One collected begonias,
<i>Thinnings</i>	Moonlit dust, gather
<i>Pressings</i>	Rushing down the hill the signs are the same.
<i>Wings</i>	They're there. To the side.
<i>Cocooning</i>	Word, I keep reaching for –
<i>The Nonsense of Observing Outer Space</i>	This butterfly comes from a bud
<i>Bascote Heath, Long Itchington</i>	I see. This is the shape remembrance takes.
<i>Ex Nihilo</i>	An impulse in the night snow
<i>Unland</i>	press on, and lean into it: where the line
<i>Brontë Taxis</i>	On the hour, up in the wind
<i>O'</i>	are you watching closely
<i>Scarborough</i>	Raised inland you were drawn towards our waves
<i>Hawthorn</i>	I like it when memories aren't pinned
<i>The Newly Bred Rose</i>	When my nose hovered, close in,
<i>Little Books</i>	Charlotte, I'm remembering when you were
<i>Tulips</i>	nothing to do with two lips
<i>The Crucible</i>	My grandfather was a ____ man, a quiet man
<i>Empty Words</i>	'they may not acorde'
<i>Innings</i>	A moment is like that, out of the hand
<i>Daylight</i>	short rectangle of you
<i>Leg Glance</i>	Flexing my knee, taking my guard
<i>The Oval Window</i>	Being <i>pitched</i> in stadia, walking out in the middle, there is a
<i>The Groundsman</i>	Since I retired, despite my runny hay fever
<i>F</i>	Following one world, another.
<i>ANOTHER?</i>	I know the feeling – of leaves at my head,
<i>Over</i>	it's nothing really
<i>The Wind in the Willows</i>	Unread, the book was all shades of distance

Set poems and stories for examination in 2027 continued

Sylvia Plath: Selected Poems from *Ariel* (1965)**Paper 2, Section B Poetry****Title:***Morning Song**Sheep in Fog**The Applicant**Lady Lazarus**Tulips**Cut**Elm**Poppies in October**Ariel**Death & Co.**Getting There**Medusa**The Moon and the Yew Tree**A Birthday Present**Letter in November**The Rival**Daddy**You're**Fever 103°**Stings**Little Fugue**Years**The Munich Mannequins**Paralytic**Balloons**Poppies in July**Kindness**Edge***First Line:**

Love set you going like a fat gold watch.

The hills step off into whiteness.

First, are you our sort of a person?

I have done it again.

The tulips are too excitable, it is winter here.

What a thrill—

I know the bottom, she says. I know it with my
great tap root:Even the sun-clouds this morning cannot manage
such skirts.

Stasis in darkness.

Two, of course there are two.

How far is it?

Off that landspit of stony mouth-plugs,

This is the light of the mind, cold and planetary.

What is this, behind this veil, is it ugly, is it beautiful?

Love, the world

If the moon smiled, she would resemble you.

You do not do, you do not do

Clownlike, happiest on your hands,

Pure? What does it mean?

Bare-handed, I hand the combs.

The yew's black fingers wag;

They enter as animals from the outer

Perfection is terrible, it cannot have children.

It happens. Will it go on? —

Since Christmas they have lived with us,

Little poppies, little hell flames,

Kindness glides about my house.

The woman is perfected.

Set poems and stories for examination in 2027 continued

Christina Rossetti: Selected Poems from *Selected Poems*
Paper 2, Section B Poetry
Title:*Heart's Chill Between**Death's Chill Between**Sweet Death**Dream-Land**Remember**The World**From the Antique**Echo**My Dream**May**Shut Out**In an Artist's Studio**A Better Resurrection**An Apple-Gathering**Winter: My Secret**Maude Clare**At Home**Up-Hill**L E L**'No, Thank You, John'**Who Shall Deliver Me?**Twice**Memory**A Daughter of Eve**Autumn Violets**Confluents**Passing and Glassing**The Thread of Life**Piteous my rhyme is**Babylon the Great***First line:**

I did not chide him, tho' I knew

Chide not; let me breathe a little,

The sweetest blossoms die.

Where sunless rivers weep

Remember me when I am gone away,

By day she woos me, soft, exceeding fair:

It's a weary life, it is; she said: –

Come to me in the silence of the night;

Hear now a curious dream I dreamed last night,

I cannot tell you how it was;

The door was shut. I looked between

One face looks out from all his canvasses,

I have no wit, no words, no tears;

I plucked pink blossoms from mine apple tree

I tell my secret? No indeed, not I:

Out of the church she followed them

When I was dead, my spirit turned

Does the road wind up-hill all the way?

Downstairs I laugh, I sport and jest with all:

I never said I loved you, John:

God strengthen me to bear myself;

I took my heart in my hand

I nursed it in my bosom while it lived,

A fool I was to sleep at noon,

Keep love for youth, and violets for the spring:

As rivers seek the sea,

All things that pass

The irresponsible silence of the land,

Piteous my rhyme is

Foul is she and ill-favoured, set askew:

Set poems and stories for examination in 2027 continued

Songs of Ourselves: The Cambridge Assessment International Education Anthology of Poetry in English, Volume 2 (ISBN 9781108462280)
Paper 2, Section B Poetry

Title:	Poet:
<i>Last Sonnet</i>	John Keats
<i>The Bargain</i>	Sir Philip Sidney
<i>To My Dear and Loving Husband</i>	Anne Bradstreet
<i>Tiger in the Menagerie</i>	Emma Jones
<i>lion heart</i>	Amanda Chong
<i>Heart and Mind</i>	Edith Sitwell
<i>In Praise of Creation</i>	Elizabeth Jennings
<i>Upon a Wasp Chilled with Cold</i>	Edward Taylor
<i>'Blessed by the Indifference...'</i> (from <i>The Flowers of Crete</i>)	Christopher Reid
<i>The Poplar-Field</i>	William Cowper
<i>Afternoon with Irish Cows</i>	Billy Collins
<i>London Snow</i>	Robert Bridges
<i>Excelsior</i>	Henry Wadsworth Longfellow
<i>The Border Builder</i>	Carol Rumens
<i>The Migrant</i>	A L Hendriks
<i>The White House</i>	Claude McKay
<i>The Song of the Shirt</i>	Thomas Hood
<i>To a Millionaire</i>	A R D Fairburn
<i>Amoretti, Sonnet 86</i>	Edmund Spenser
<i>Homecoming</i>	Lenrie Peters
<i>I Years had been from Home</i>	Emily Dickinson
<i>The Exequy</i>	Henry King
<i>Old Man & Very Old Man</i>	James Henry
<i>Late Wisdom</i>	George Crabbe
<i>'I Have a Rendezvous with Death'</i>	Alan Seeger
<i>Song</i>	Alun Lewis
<i>The Dead Knight</i>	John Masefield
<i>From the Coptic</i>	Stevie Smith
<i>I Dream of You...</i>	Christina Rossetti
<i>Sleep</i>	Kenneth Slessor

Set poems and stories for examination in 2027 continued

**Stories of Ourselves: The Cambridge International Education Anthology of Stories in English,
Volume 3 (ISBN 9781009467681)
Paper 2, Section C Prose**

Story:

The Black Veil
The Tell-Tale Heart
A Wagner Matinee
Araby
The Preliminaries
The Nightmare Room
The Woman at the Store
Never
Atrophy
A Lady's Beaded Bag
The Lagoon
The Blush
Land Deal
Kind Stranger
Staying Behind

Author:

Charles Dickens
Edgar Allen Poe
Willa Cather
James Joyce
Cornelia Comer
Arthur Conan Doyle
Katherine Mansfield
H E Bates
Edith Wharton
Tennessee Williams
Janet Frame
Elizabeth Taylor
Gerald Murnane
Meron Hadero
Ken Liu

Set texts for examination in 2028

The set texts listed below are for examination in **2028**.

Set texts regularly rotate on the syllabus and may change from one year of examination to the next. Before you begin teaching, check the set text list for the year in which your candidates will take their examinations.

Learners study **two** set texts, each from a different section.

Candidates answer **two** questions in the examination, each from a different section of the question paper.

Section A Drama

Edward Albee	<i>Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?</i>
Aphra Behn	<i>The Rover</i>
Inua Ellams	<i>Barber Shop Chronicles</i>
William Shakespeare	<i>The Tempest</i>

Section B Poetry

Zaffar Kunial	Selected Poems from <i>England's Green</i>
Sylvia Plath	Selected Poems from <i>Ariel</i> (1965)
Christina Rossetti	Selected Poems from <i>Selected Poems</i>
<i>Songs of Ourselves, Volume 2</i>	Selected Poems (new selection for 2026, 2027 and 2028)

Section C Prose

Chris Abani	<i>Graceland</i>
John Steinbeck	<i>The Grapes of Wrath</i>
<i>Stories of Ourselves, Volume 3</i>	Selected Stories (new selection from <i>Volume 3</i> for 2027 and 2028)
Tara June Winch	<i>The Yield</i>

Set poems and stories for examination in 2028

Poems and stories for examination in 2028 are listed below.

Zaffar Kunial: Selected Poems from *England's Green* Paper 2, Section B Poetry

Title:	First Line:
<i>Foxglove Country</i>	Sometimes I like to hide in the word
<i>Forget-Me-Not</i>	A heart-note whispered into the ear of a mouse
<i>The Hedge</i>	This place is full of them. England. Britain.
<i>This in Land</i>	That way a butterfly lifts an edge of world
<i>England</i>	We all have lives that go on without us.
<i>Green</i>	Green she is when I find her. Or find her grave. A second
<i>Invasive</i>	Sweet chestnuts from the Romans, but this whole land, till
<i>Foregrounds</i>	One collected begonias,
<i>Thinnings</i>	Moonlit dust, gather
<i>Pressings</i>	Rushing down the hill the signs are the same.
<i>Wings</i>	They're there. To the side.
<i>Cocooning</i>	Word, I keep reaching for –
<i>The Nonsense of Observing Outer Space</i>	This butterfly comes from a bud
<i>Bascote Heath, Long Itchington</i>	I see. This is the shape remembrance takes.
<i>Ex Nihilo</i>	An impulse in the night snow
<i>Unland</i>	press on, and lean into it: where the line
<i>Brontë Taxis</i>	On the hour, up in the wind
<i>O'</i>	are you watching closely
<i>Scarborough</i>	Raised inland you were drawn towards our waves
<i>Hawthorn</i>	I like it when memories aren't pinned
<i>The Newly Bred Rose</i>	When my nose hovered, close in,
<i>Little Books</i>	Charlotte, I'm remembering when you were
<i>Tulips</i>	nothing to do with two lips
<i>The Crucible</i>	My grandfather was a ____ man, a quiet man
<i>Empty Words</i>	'they may not acorde'
<i>Innings</i>	A moment is like that, out of the hand
<i>Daylight</i>	short rectangle of you
<i>Leg Glance</i>	Flexing my knee, taking my guard
<i>The Oval Window</i>	Being <i>pitched</i> in stadia, walking out in the middle, there is a
<i>The Groundsman</i>	Since I retired, despite my runny hay fever
<i>F</i>	Following one world, another.
<i>ANOTHER?</i>	I know the feeling – of leaves at my head,
<i>Over</i>	it's nothing really
<i>The Wind in the Willows</i>	Unread, the book was all shades of distance

Set poems and stories for examination in 2028 continued

**Sylvia Plath: Selected Poems from *Ariel* (1965)
Paper 2, Section B Poetry****Title:***Morning Song**Sheep in Fog**The Applicant**Lady Lazarus**Tulips**Cut**Elm**Poppies in October**Ariel**Death & Co.**Getting There**Medusa**The Moon and the Yew Tree**A Birthday Present**Letter in November**The Rival**Daddy**You're**Fever 103°**Stings**Little Fugue**Years**The Munich Mannequins**Paralytic**Balloons**Poppies in July**Kindness**Edge***First Line:**

Love set you going like a fat gold watch.

The hills step off into whiteness.

First, are you our sort of a person?

I have done it again.

The tulips are too excitable, it is winter here.

What a thrill—

I know the bottom, she says. I know it with my
great tap root:Even the sun-clouds this morning cannot manage
such skirts.

Stasis in darkness.

Two, of course there are two.

How far is it?

Off that landspit of stony mouth-plugs,

This is the light of the mind, cold and planetary.

What is this, behind this veil, is it ugly, is it beautiful?

Love, the world

If the moon smiled, she would resemble you.

You do not do, you do not do

Clownlike, happiest on your hands,

Pure? What does it mean?

Bare-handed, I hand the combs.

The yew's black fingers wag;

They enter as animals from the outer

Perfection is terrible, it cannot have children.

It happens. Will it go on? —

Since Christmas they have lived with us,

Little poppies, little hell flames,

Kindness glides about my house.

The woman is perfected.

Set poems and stories for examination in 2028 continued

Christina Rossetti: Selected Poems from *Selected Poems*
Paper 2, Section B Poetry
Title:*Heart's Chill Between**Death's Chill Between**Sweet Death**Dream-Land**Remember**The World**From the Antique**Echo**My Dream**May**Shut Out**In an Artist's Studio**A Better Resurrection**An Apple-Gathering**Winter: My Secret**Maude Clare**At Home**Up-Hill**L E L**'No, Thank You, John'**Who Shall Deliver Me?**Twice**Memory**A Daughter of Eve**Autumn Violets**Confluents**Passing and Glassing**The Thread of Life**Piteous my rhyme is**Babylon the Great***First line:**

I did not chide him, tho' I knew

Chide not; let me breathe a little,

The sweetest blossoms die.

Where sunless rivers weep

Remember me when I am gone away,

By day she woos me, soft, exceeding fair:

It's a weary life, it is; she said: –

Come to me in the silence of the night;

Hear now a curious dream I dreamed last night,

I cannot tell you how it was;

The door was shut. I looked between

One face looks out from all his canvasses,

I have no wit, no words, no tears;

I plucked pink blossoms from mine apple tree

I tell my secret? No indeed, not I:

Out of the church she followed them

When I was dead, my spirit turned

Does the road wind up-hill all the way?

Downstairs I laugh, I sport and jest with all:

I never said I loved you, John:

God strengthen me to bear myself;

I took my heart in my hand

I nursed it in my bosom while it lived,

A fool I was to sleep at noon,

Keep love for youth, and violets for the spring:

As rivers seek the sea,

All things that pass

The irresponsible silence of the land,

Piteous my rhyme is

Foul is she and ill-favoured, set askew:

Set poems and stories for examination in 2028 continued

Songs of Ourselves: The Cambridge Assessment International Education Anthology of Poetry in English, Volume 2 (ISBN 9781108462280)
Paper 2, Section B Poetry

Title:	Poet:
<i>Last Sonnet</i>	John Keats
<i>The Bargain</i>	Sir Philip Sidney
<i>To My Dear and Loving Husband</i>	Anne Bradstreet
<i>Tiger in the Menagerie</i>	Emma Jones
<i>lion heart</i>	Amanda Chong
<i>Heart and Mind</i>	Edith Sitwell
<i>In Praise of Creation</i>	Elizabeth Jennings
<i>Upon a Wasp Chilled with Cold</i>	Edward Taylor
<i>'Blessed by the Indifference...'</i> (from <i>The Flowers of Crete</i>)	Christopher Reid
<i>The Poplar-Field</i>	William Cowper
<i>Afternoon with Irish Cows</i>	Billy Collins
<i>London Snow</i>	Robert Bridges
<i>Excelsior</i>	Henry Wadsworth Longfellow
<i>The Border Builder</i>	Carol Rumens
<i>The Migrant</i>	A L Hendriks
<i>The White House</i>	Claude McKay
<i>The Song of the Shirt</i>	Thomas Hood
<i>To a Millionaire</i>	A R D Fairburn
<i>Amoretti, Sonnet 86</i>	Edmund Spenser
<i>Homecoming</i>	Lenrie Peters
<i>I Years had been from Home</i>	Emily Dickinson
<i>The Exequy</i>	Henry King
<i>Old Man & Very Old Man</i>	James Henry
<i>Late Wisdom</i>	George Crabbe
<i>'I Have a Rendezvous with Death'</i>	Alan Seeger
<i>Song</i>	Alun Lewis
<i>The Dead Knight</i>	John Masefield
<i>From the Coptic</i>	Stevie Smith
<i>I Dream of You...</i>	Christina Rossetti
<i>Sleep</i>	Kenneth Slessor

Set poems and stories for examination in 2028 continued

**Stories of Ourselves: The Cambridge International Education Anthology of Stories in English,
Volume 3 (ISBN 9781009467681)
Paper 2, Section C Prose**

Story:

The Black Veil
The Tell-Tale Heart
A Wagner Matinee
Araby
The Preliminaries
The Nightmare Room
The Woman at the Store
Never
Atrophy
A Lady's Beaded Bag
The Lagoon
The Blush
Land Deal
Kind Stranger
Staying Behind

Author:

Charles Dickens
Edgar Allen Poe
Willa Cather
James Joyce
Cornelia Comer
Arthur Conan Doyle
Katherine Mansfield
H E Bates
Edith Wharton
Tennessee Williams
Janet Frame
Elizabeth Taylor
Gerald Murnane
Meron Hadero
Ken Liu

Editions of set texts used for setting passages in the examination

Examination questions, passages and poems will be set from the editions of the texts specified below.

Paper 2: Drama, Poetry and Prose

Author	Text	Publisher
Abani, Chris	<i>Graceland</i>	Picador
Albee, Edward	<i>Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?</i>	Vintage Publishing
Behn, Aphra	<i>The Rover and Other Plays</i>	Oxford World's Classics
Ellams, Inua	<i>Barber Shop Chronicles</i>	Methuen Drama
Kunial, Zaffar	Selected Poems from <i>England's Green</i>	Faber and Faber
Plath, Sylvia	Selected Poems from <i>Ariel</i> (1965)	Faber and Faber
Rossetti, Christina	Selected Poems from <i>Selected Poems</i> (2008)	Penguin Classics
Shakespeare, William	<i>The Tempest</i> from 'The Complete works of William Shakespeare: The Alexander Text'	Collins
<i>Songs of Ourselves, Volume 2</i> (ISBN 9781108462280)	Selected Poems	Cambridge University Press
Steinbeck, John	<i>The Grapes of Wrath</i>	Penguin Modern Classics
<i>Stories of Ourselves, Volume 3</i> (ISBN 9781009467681)	Selected Stories	Cambridge University Press
Waugh, Evelyn	<i>A Handful of Dust</i>	Penguin Modern Classics
Whitehead, Colson	<i>The Underground Railroad</i>	Fleet
Winch, Tara June	<i>The Yield</i>	HarperVia

Faculty feedback: 'Understanding how and why our climate is changing and providing the knowledge and skills to explore the challenges plays a key role in every student's education.'

Feedback from: Dr Amy Munro-Faure, Head of Education and Student Engagement of Cambridge Zero

4 Details of the assessment

Paper 1 – Writing

Written paper, 2 hours, 50 marks

This paper has two sections, Section A: Shorter writing and reflective commentary, and Section B: Extended writing. Each section is worth 25 marks.

Candidates must answer **two** questions: Question 1 in Section A (compulsory), and **one** question in Section B.

Dictionaries may **not** be used.

Section A: Shorter writing and reflective commentary

Question 1 is in two parts:

- (a) writing a short text in response to a prompt (15 marks)
- (b) writing a reflective commentary based on how the text produced in part (a) fulfils the brief (10 marks).

In Question 1(a), candidates are required to write a response of no more than 400 words to a prompt, choosing their vocabulary, style and structure to fit a specific form, purpose and audience.

Examples of the text types candidates may be required to produce include advertisements, brochures, leaflets, editorials, news stories, articles, reviews, blogs, investigative journalism, letters, podcasts, (auto)biographies, travel writing, diaries, essays, scripted speech, narrative writing, and descriptive writing.

This question assesses AO2.

In Question 1(b), candidates are required to write a reflective commentary explaining how their linguistics choices have contributed to fulfilling the brief in part (a).

Candidates are required to focus on their choices of form, structure and language, and to analyse how these stylistic choices relate to audience and shape meaning.

This question assesses AO3.

Section B: Extended writing

Candidates choose to answer **one** out of three questions.

Each question corresponds to one of the three following categories:

- imaginative/descriptive
- discursive/argumentative
- review/critical.

Depending on the category, examples of the text types candidates may be required to produce include advertisements, brochures, leaflets, editorials, news stories, articles, reviews, blogs, investigative journalism,

letters, podcasts, (auto)biographies, travel writing, diaries, essays, scripted speech, narrative writing, and descriptive writing.

In each question, candidates are required to:

- produce a continuous piece of writing of 600–900 words
- express their ideas clearly, coherently and accurately, using an appropriate range of language
- develop their writing in a manner appropriate to the form, purpose and audience.

This question assesses AO2.

Paper 2 – Drama, Poetry and Prose

Written paper, 2 hours, 50 marks

This paper has three sections, Section A: Drama, Section B: Poetry and Section C: Prose. Each section is worth 25 marks.

Candidates must answer **two** questions, each from a different section.

On each set text, candidates will have a choice between two questions (a) or (b). Each requires an essay length response. The (b) question will be based on a passage or a poem from the set text printed on the question paper. Candidates may choose the type of question they wish to answer.

Candidates must demonstrate the following:

- knowledge and understanding of the set text they have studied and an appreciation of relevant contexts
- analysis of the ways in which writers' choices shape meaning and create effects
- an informed, independent opinion about the text studied
- appropriate communication of literary ideas and arguments.

All questions on this paper assess all four assessment objectives: AO1, AO2, AO3 and AO4.

Set texts are **not** allowed in the examination room.

Set texts are listed in Section 3 Subject content. Check the set text list for the year in which your candidates will take their examinations.

Dictionaries may **not** be used.

Command words

Command words and their meanings help candidates know what is expected from them in the exams. The table below includes command words used in the assessment for this syllabus. The use of the command word will relate to the subject context.

Command word	What it means
Analyse	examine in detail to show meaning, identify elements and the relationship between them
Assess	make an informed judgement
Comment	give an informed opinion
Compare	identify/comment on similarities and/or differences
Consider	review and respond to given information
Contrast	identify/comment on differences
Demonstrate	show how or give an example
Describe	state the points of a topic / give characteristics and main features
Develop	take forward to a more advanced stage or build upon given information
Discuss	write about issue(s) or topic(s) in depth in a structured way
Examine	investigate closely, in detail
Explain	set out purposes or reasons / make the relationships between things clear / say why and/or how and support with relevant evidence
Suggest	apply knowledge and understanding to situations where there are a range of valid responses in order to make proposals / put forward considerations

Phrases such as 'In what ways ...?' and 'How far and in what ways...?' may also be seen in the assessment for this syllabus.

5 What else you need to know

This section is an overview of other information you need to know about this syllabus. It will help to share the administrative information with your exams officer so they know when you will need their support. Find more information about our administrative processes at www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide

Before you start

Previous study

We recommend that learners starting this course should have completed a course in English equivalent to Cambridge IGCSE™ or Cambridge O Level and should have a level of English equivalent to first language English at IGCSE.

Guided learning hours

We design Cambridge International AS & A Level syllabuses to require about 180 guided learning hours for each Cambridge International AS Level and about 360 guided learning hours for a Cambridge International A Level. The number of hours a learner needs to achieve the qualification may vary according to each school and the learners' previous experience of the subject.

Availability and timetables

All Cambridge schools are allocated to one of six administrative zones. Each zone has a specific timetable. Find your administrative zone at www.cambridgeinternational.org/adminzone. You can view the timetable for your administrative zone at www.cambridgeinternational.org/timetables

You can enter candidates in the June and November exam series.

Check you are using the syllabus for the year the candidate is taking the exam.

Private candidates can enter for this syllabus. For more information, please refer to the *Cambridge Guide to Making Entries*.

Combining with other syllabuses

Candidates can take this syllabus alongside other syllabuses in a single exam series. The only exceptions are:

- Cambridge International AS & A Level English Language (9093)
- Cambridge International AS & A Level Literature in English (9695)
- syllabuses with the same title at the same level.

Group awards: Cambridge AICE Diploma

Cambridge AICE Diploma (Advanced International Certificate of Education) is a group award for Cambridge International AS & A Level. It encourages schools to offer a broad and balanced curriculum by recognising the achievements of learners who pass exams in a range of different subjects.

Learn more about Cambridge AICE Diploma at www.cambridgeinternational.org/aice

Making entries

Exams officers are responsible for submitting entries. We encourage them to work closely with you to make sure they enter the right number of candidates for the right combination of syllabus components. Entry option codes and instructions for submitting entries are in the *Cambridge Guide to Making Entries*. Your exams officer has access to this guide.

Exam administration

To keep our exams secure, we produce question papers for different areas of the world, known as administrative zones. We allocate all Cambridge schools to an administrative zone determined by their location. Each zone has a specific timetable.

Some of our syllabuses offer candidates different assessment options. An entry option code is used to identify the components the candidate will take relevant to the administrative zone and the available assessment options.

Support for exams officers

We know how important exams officers are to the successful running of exams. We provide them with the support they need to make entries on time. Your exams officer will find this support, and guidance for all other phases of the Cambridge Exams Cycle, at www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide

Retakes

Candidates can retake Cambridge International AS Level as many times as they want to. Information on retake entries is at www.cambridgeinternational.org/retakes

To confirm what entry options are available for this syllabus, refer to the *Cambridge Guide to Making Entries* for the relevant series.

Language

This syllabus and the related assessment materials are available in English only.

Accessibility and equality

Syllabus and assessment design

At Cambridge we recognise that our candidates have highly diverse socio-economic, cultural and linguistic backgrounds, and may also have a variety of protected characteristics. Protected characteristics include special educational needs and disability (SEND), religion and belief, and characteristics related to gender and identity.

We follow accessible design principles to make our syllabuses and assessment materials as accessible and inclusive as possible. We review language accessibility, visual resources, question layout and the contexts used in questions. Using this approach means that we give all candidates the fairest possible opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and understanding.

Access arrangements

Our design principles aim to make sure our assessment materials are accessible for all candidates. To further minimise barriers faced by candidates with SEND, illness or injury, we offer a range of access arrangements and modified papers. This is the principal way in which we comply with our duty to make 'reasonable adjustments', as guided by the UK Equality Act 2010.

Important:

Requested access arrangements should be based on evidence of the candidate's barrier to taking an assessment and should also reflect their normal way of working. This is explained in section 1.3 of the *Cambridge Handbook* www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide

- For Cambridge to approve an access arrangement, we need to agree that it constitutes a reasonable adjustment and does not affect the security or integrity of the assessment.
- Details of our standard access arrangements and modified question papers are available in section 1.3 of the *Cambridge Handbook* www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide
- Centres are expected to check the availability of access arrangements and modified question papers at the start of the course. All applications should be made by the deadlines published in section 1.3 of the *Cambridge Handbook* www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide
- Contact us at the start of the course to find out if we can approve an access arrangement that is not included in the list of standard access arrangements.
- Candidates who cannot access parts of the assessment may be able to receive an award based on the parts they have completed.

After the exam

Grading and reporting

Grades a, b, c, d or e indicate the standard a candidate achieved at Cambridge International AS Level. 'a' is the highest and 'e' is the lowest grade.

'Ungraded' means that the candidate's performance did not meet the standard required for the lowest grade (e). 'Ungraded' is reported on the statement of results but not on the certificate. In specific circumstances your candidates may see one of the following letters on their statement of results:

- Q (PENDING)
- X (NO RESULT).

These letters do not appear on the certificate.

On the statement of results and certificates, Cambridge International AS Level is shown as General Certificate of Education, GCE Advanced Subsidiary Level (GCE AS Level).

School feedback: 'Cambridge International A Levels are the 'gold standard' qualification. They are based on rigorous, academic syllabuses that are accessible to students from a wide range of abilities yet have the capacity to stretch our most able.'

Feedback from: Director of Studies, Auckland Grammar School, New Zealand

How students, teachers and higher education can use the grades

Cambridge International AS Level

Assessment at Cambridge International AS Level has two purposes:

- 1 to measure learning and achievement

The assessment confirms achievement and performance in relation to the knowledge, understanding and skills specified in the syllabus.

- 2 to show likely future success

The outcomes help predict which students are well prepared for a particular course or career and/or which students are more likely to be successful.

The outcomes help students choose the most suitable course or career

The outcomes help decide whether students part way through a Cambridge International A Level course are making enough progress to continue

The outcomes guide teaching and learning in the next stages of the Cambridge International A Level course.

Changes to this syllabus for 2027 and 2028

The syllabus has been updated. This is version 1, published September 2024.

You must read the whole syllabus before planning your teaching programme. We review our syllabuses regularly to make sure they continue to meet the needs of our schools. In updating this syllabus, we have made it easier for teachers and students to understand, keeping the familiar features that teachers and schools value.

Changes to syllabus content

- Set texts have been updated for Paper 2 Drama, Poetry and Prose for 2027 and 2028.
 - The text editions from which examination question papers are set are specified for all set texts on page 25.
-

Significant changes to the syllabus are indicated by black vertical lines either side of the text.

Any textbooks endorsed to support the syllabus for examination from 2021 are still suitable for use with this syllabus.



Syllabuses and specimen materials represent the final authority on the content and structure of all of our assessments.

With a Customer Services team available 24 hours a day, 6 days a week, and dedicated regional teams supporting schools in 160 countries, we understand your local context and are here to guide you so you can provide your learners with everything they need to prepare for Cambridge International AS & A Level.

Quality management

We are committed to providing exceptional quality. In line with this commitment, our quality management system for the provision of international education programmes and qualifications for students aged 5 to 19 is independently certified as meeting the internationally recognised standard, ISO 9001:2015. Learn more at www.cambridgeinternational.org/about-us/our-standards/



School feedback: ‘While studying Cambridge IGCSE and Cambridge International A Levels, students broaden their horizons through a global perspective and develop a lasting passion for learning.’

Feedback from: Zhai Xiaoning, Deputy Principal, The High School Affiliated to Renmin University of China

We are committed to making our documents accessible in accordance with the WCAG 2.1 Standard. We are always looking to improve the accessibility of our documents. If you find any problems or you think we are not meeting accessibility requirements, contact us at **info@cambridgeinternational.org** with the subject heading: Digital accessibility. If you need this document in a different format, contact us and supply your name, email address and requirements and we will respond within 15 working days.

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