



Circular Number: 0016/2024

To: Boards of Management, Principal Teachers and Teaching Staff of Post-Primary Schools, Special Schools and Chief Executives of Education and Training Boards (ETBs).

Prescribed Material for the Leaving Certificate English Examination in 2026

The Department of Education wishes to inform the management authorities of second-level schools that the attached lists include the prescribed material for the Leaving Certificate English Examination in June 2026.

The Department requests school authorities to bring this circular to the attention of all English teachers. School authorities and teachers should note that while this is a list of prescribed texts, no specific text is compulsory, although at Higher Level one of the listed Shakespeare plays must be studied.

The Department reminds schools that any use of these texts in Transition Year should be in accordance with the Department's published guidelines on the content of the Transition Year programme.

The Department requests school authorities to give adequate notice of these texts to students before the start of the relevant school year.

This Circular can be accessed on www.gov.ie.

Enquiries regarding this Circular should be e-mailed to CAP@education.gov.ie

Celeste O'Callaghan
Curriculum and Assessment Policy Unit
19 February 2024



Prescribed Material for the Leaving Certificate English Examination in 2026

As the syllabus indicates, students are required to study:

- One text for study on its own – See 1 below
- Three other texts for comparative study – See 2 below
- A selection of poetry – See 3 below

Texts chosen for study must be from this list.

At Higher Level a play by Shakespeare must be one of the texts chosen.

This can be studied on its own or as an element in a comparative study.

At Ordinary Level the study of a play by Shakespeare is optional.

1. **One text on its own** from the following texts: -

BRONTË, Anne	The Tenant of Wildfell Hall (H/O)
HANSBERRY, Lorraine	A Raisin in the Sun (O)
KEANE, John B.	Sive (O)
MILLER, Arthur	The Crucible (H/O)
O'FARRELL, Maggie	Hamnet (H/O)
RASH, Ron	The Cove (O)
SHAKESPEARE, William	Macbeth (H/O)
STOKER, Bram	Dracula (H/O)
WHITEHEAD, Colson	The Underground Railroad (O)

N.B. Texts marked H/O may be studied at Higher Level or at Ordinary Level.

Texts marked O may be studied only at Ordinary Level.



2. Three other texts in a comparative manner, according to the comparative modes prescribed for this course.

- Any texts from the list of texts prescribed for comparative study, **other than the one already chosen for study on its own**, may be selected for the comparative study.
- In this list, texts are in three broad categories: novel and memoir; drama; and film. At Higher Level and at Ordinary Level, a film may be studied as **one** of the three texts in a comparative study. **Only the texts identified on the list as films may be studied as films.**

The Comparative Modes for Examination in 2026 are:

- | | | |
|-----------------------|-------|------------------------------|
| <u>Higher Level</u> | (i) | Cultural Context |
| | (ii) | General Vision and Viewpoint |
| | (iii) | Literary Genre |
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 | | |
| <u>Ordinary Level</u> | (i) | Social Setting |
| | (ii) | Relationships |
| | (iii) | Hero, heroine, villain |



**List of Texts prescribed for comparative study, for examination in the year
2026**

Novel / Memoir

ADICHIE, Chimamanda Ngozi	Purple Hibiscus
AUSTEN, Jane	Pride and Prejudice
BARKER, Pat	The Silence of the Girls
BARRETT, Colin	Young Skins
BRONTË, Anne	The Tenant of Wildfell Hall
BUI, Thi	The Best We Could Do
CHANDLER, Raymond	The Big Sleep
DOERR, Anthony	All the Light We Cannot See
DU MAURIER, Daphne	Rebecca
GARMUS, Bonnie	Lessons in Chemistry
GREGORY, Tom	A Boy in the Water
HARDY, Thomas	The Mayor of Casterbridge
KEEGAN, Claire	Small Things Like These
McCORMACK, Mike	Notes from a Coma
O'FARRELL, Maggie	Hamnet
OWENS, Delia	Where the Crawdads Sing
PINEIRO, Claudia	Elena Knows
RASH, Ron	The Cove
STOKER, Bram	Dracula
WHITEHEAD, Colson	The Underground Railroad



Drama

CARR, Marina	Girl on an Altar
EURIPIDES	Medea
HANSBERRY, Lorraine	A Raisin in the Sun
KEANE, John B.	Sive
Mc MAHON, Phillip	Once before I go
MILLER, Arthur	The Crucible
WADE, Laura	Colder Than Here
SHAKESPEARE, William	Macbeth
	The Merry Wives of Windsor

Film

ANDERSON, Wes	The Grand Budapest Hotel
DARABONT, Frank	The Shawshank Redemption
ERGÜVEN, Deniz Gamze	Mustang
GERWIG, Greta	Barbie
JOHNSON, Rian	Knives Out
KAPADIA, Asif	Diego Maradona
KAZAN, Elia	On the Waterfront
McDONAGH, Martin	The Banshees of Inisherin



3. Poetry

Higher Level

A selection from the poetry of **eight** poets is prescribed for Higher Level.

Students will be expected to have studied **at least six poems** by each poet.

Ordinary Level

A total of **36 poems** is prescribed for Ordinary Level.

Poets prescribed for higher level 2026

BISHOP, Elizabeth

The Fish
The Bight
At the Fishhouses
The Prodigal
Questions of Travel
The Armadillo
Sestina
First Death in Nova Scotia
Filling Station
In the Waiting Room

DONNE, John

The Sunne Rising
Song: Go, and catch a falling star
The Anniversarie
Song: Sweetest love, I do not goe
The Dreame (Deare love, for nothing less than thee
...)
A Valediction Forbidding Mourning
The Flea
Batter my heart
At the round earth's imagined corners
Thou hast made me

ELIOT, Thomas S.

The Lovesong of J. Alfred Prufrock



Preludes
Aunt Helen
 from The Waste Land II. A Game of Chess
Journey of the Magi
 from Landscapes
III Usk
IV Rannoch, by Glencoe
 from The Four Quartets East Coker IV

HEANEY, Seamus

The Forge
Bogland
The Tollund Man
Mossbawn: Two Poems in Dedication (1) Sunlight
A Constable Calls
The Skunk
The Harvest Bow
The Underground
Postscript
A Call
Tate's Avenue
The Pitchfork
Lightenings viii (The annals say ...)

MEEHAN, Paula

Buying Winkles
The Pattern
The Statue of the Virgin at Granard Speaks
Cora, Auntie
The Exact Moment I Became a Poet
My Father Perceived as a Vision of St. Francis
Hearth Lesson
Prayer for the Children of Longing
Death of a Field
Them Ducks Died for Ireland

NÍ CHUILLEANÁIN, Eiléan

Lucina Schynning in Silence of the Nicht
The Second Voyage



Deaths and Engines
Street
Fireman's Lift
All for You
Following
Kilcash
Translation
The Bend in the Road
On Lacking the Killer Instinct
To Niall Woods and Xenya Ostrovskaia, married in
Dublin on 9 September 2009

SMITH, Tracy K.

Joy (Elegy 1)
Dominion over the beasts of the Earth
The Searchers
Letter to a Photojournalist Going In
The Universe is a House Party
The Museum of Obsolescence
Don't you wonder, sometimes?
It's Not
The Universe as Primal Scream
The Greatest Personal Privation
I am 60 odd years of age - *from* I will tell you the truth
about this, I will tell you all about it
Ghazal

YEATS, William Butler

The Lake Isle of Innisfree
September 1913
The Wild Swans at Coole
An Irish Airman Foresees his Death
Easter 1916
The Second Coming
Sailing to Byzantium
From Meditations in Time of Civil War:
VI, The Stare's Nest by My Window
In Memory of Eva Gore-Booth and Con Markiewicz



Swift's Epitaph
An Acre of Grass
from Under Ben Bulbin: V and VI
Politics

Poetry prescribed for ordinary level 2026

ADCOCK, Fleur	Advice to a Discarded Lover
BISHOP, Elizabeth	The Prodigal Filling Station
BROWNING, Elizabeth Barrett	How Do I Love Thee?
BRYCE, Colette	Mammy Dozes
CLANCY, Kate	Driving to the Hospital
DONNE, John	The Flea Song: Go, and catch a falling star
DOVE, Rita	Summit Beach, 1921
ELIOT, T.S.	Preludes Aunt Helen
HEANEY, Seamus	A Constable Calls The Underground A Call
KEEGAN, Colm	Memorial
MEEHAN, Paula	Buying Winkles Hearth Lesson Prayer for the Children of Longing
MULDOON, Paul	The Loaf
NÍ CHUILLEANÁIN, Eiléan	Street To Niall Woods and Xenya Ostrovskaja, married in Dublin on 9 September 2009



NYE, Naomi Shihab	Kindness
OLIVER, Mary	When I am Among the Trees
POE, Edgar Allan	The Raven
SHELLEY, Percy Bysshe	Ozymandias
SHUTTLE, Penelope Zoo	Morning 16
SMITH, Tracy K	It's Not The Greatest Personal Privation The Searchers
TRAYNOR, Jessica	The Artane Band
WILLIAMS, William Carlos	This is Just to Say
WRIGHT, James	Lying in a Hammock at William Duffy's Farm in Pine Island, Minnesota
YEATS, William Butler	The Lake Isle of Innisfree The Wild Swans at Coole An Irish Airman Foresees his Death
ZEPHANIAH, Benjamin	The Sun