

# LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

## INTRODUCTION

The public assessment of this subject is based on the *Curriculum and Assessment Guide (Secondary 4–6) Literature in English* jointly prepared by the Curriculum Development Council and the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority. Candidates should refer to the Guide for the knowledge, understanding and skills, etc. they are required to demonstrate in the assessment.

## ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

The assessment objectives of Literature in English are to evaluate the following:

- (a) candidates' familiarity with the background and content of literary and film texts as well as the techniques employed by the writers/filmmakers in their works;
- (b) candidates' ability to articulate an informed personal response;
- (c) candidates' ability to write clear, succinct answers which demonstrate critical and analytical skills; and
- (d) candidates' ability to write an extended piece of writing in SBA work related to film texts.

## MODE OF ASSESSMENT

The table outlines the various components of the public assessment of Literature in English in the 2026 HKDSE:

Component		Weighting	Duration
Public Examination	Paper 1 Essay Writing	50%	3 hours
	Paper 2 Appreciation	30%	2 hours
	School Based Assessment (SBA)	20%	-

## PUBLIC EXAMINATION

### Paper 1 Essay Writing (3 hours) (50%)

This paper will comprise three sections, A – C. Candidates must answer **one** question on **one** of two novels in Section A; **one** question on **one** of two plays in Section B; and **one** question comparing **two or more** short stories in Section C. In each of the three sections, there will be a choice of two questions on each text. All questions will require essay-type answers, with some inviting imaginative expansion of texts.

**Paper 2    Appreciation    (2 hours)**

**(30%)**

This paper will be divided into 3 sections. Candidates must choose one question from a choice of four in Section A, one question from a choice of two in Section B and one question in Section C. Multi-part questions will invite critical analyses of a single passage from either of the prescribed novels or the prescribed plays in Section A (10% of the subject mark), two or three set poems either by the same or different poets in Section B (12% of the subject mark), and one unseen poem in Section C (8% of the subject mark). For the Unseen Poetry section, candidates should study a broad range of modern poetry, including themes such as love, nature, war, death and animals. Candidates will be expected to show an ability to understand the thought and feeling in the poetry, and the ways in which these are conveyed. Copies of the set and unseen poems will be included in the question paper.

**School Based Assessment (SBA)**

**(20%)**

The SBA component of Literature in English constitutes 20% of the total weighting for the subject. It involves the preparation of an analytical study of at least one film/ filmmaker/ film genre **OR** an essay on a topic related to at least one film/ filmmaker/ film genre of around 2000 to 2500 words.

Work for the SBA should not be exclusively or extensively based on the films in the List of Set Texts. Similarly, work for the SBA should not be exclusively or extensively based on film adaptations of the written texts in the List of Set Texts. Candidates can use the texts they study as an inspiration for their SBA work, but they should not include detailed analysis of those works.

The main film(s) chosen for study should have been made originally in English. Candidates should be encouraged to take the opportunity to explore in depth areas such as the content, filmic techniques and socio-cultural background underpinning the production of the film(s). Extended essays which deal exclusively with such subjects as history, sociology, psychology or science are not appropriate.

Candidates are required to safe keep their SBA work for inspection and authentication purposes until the release of the HKDSE results.

The detailed requirements, regulations, assessment criteria and guidelines are provided in the *SBA Handbook for HKDSE Literature in English* published by the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority.

Private candidates need not complete the SBA component. Their subject result will be based entirely on the public examination result.

## THE SYLLABUS

The syllabus is based on the study of **one** set of texts, which will vary over time. The set offers a choice of one of two novels, one of two plays, a set of films, a set of short stories and a set of poems. The texts will be examined as follows:

Genre	Paper(s)
Novels	1 Section A & 2 Section A (text analysis)
Plays	1 Section B & 2 Section A (text analysis)
Short stories	1 Section C
Poetry	2 Section B (comparison of works by one or more poets)

### LIST OF SET TEXTS FOR THE 2026 HKDSE LITERATURE IN ENGLISH EXAMINATION

Novels: *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*, Muriel Spark **OR** *Rebecca*, Daphne du Maurier

Plays: *The Merchant of Venice*, William Shakespeare **OR** *Educating Rita*, Willy Russell

Short stories:

Anita Desai:	Games at Twilight
Ray Bradbury:	The Veldt
Roald Dahl:	Parson's Pleasure
Kate Chopin:	The Story of an Hour
Shirley Jackson:	The Daemon Lover
Ken Liu:	The Paper Menagerie
Langston Hughes:	Thank You, M'am
George Saunders:	I Can Speak! <sup>TM</sup>

Poetry:

Thomas Hardy:	'Afterwards', 'Bags of Meat', 'Weathers'
e. e. cummings:	'Buffalo Bill's', 'maggie and milly and molly and may', 'nobody loses all the time'
Emily Dickinson:	'Like Rain it sounded till it curved', 'There came a Wind like a Bugle', 'There's a certain Slant of light'
Imtiaz Dharker:	'Number 106', 'Speech Balloon', 'It Doesn't Matter'
Ted Hughes:	'Thrushes', 'Crow and the Birds', 'Full Moon and Little Frieda'

Films\*:

*Vertigo* (1958) Dir: Alfred Hitchcock  
*Chinatown* (1974) Dir: Roman Polanski  
*The Remains of the Day* (1993) Dir: James Ivory  
*The Painted Veil* (2006) Dir: John Curran  
*Life of Pi* (2012) Dir: Ang Lee

\*One or more of these films can be used as a means of preparation for the SBA component but should not form its main focus.