

# PART 1

# Starting your Cambridge IGCSE Literature

## UNIT 1 How to get the most from this Coursebook

### 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 IGCSE Literature 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.

### 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 you need to succeed in your Cambridge IGCSE Literature course.

This book is intended mainly for students following the Cambridge IGCSE Literature (English) syllabus (0486). But much of it will still be relevant to you if you are following a Cambridge IGCSE Literature syllabus with a different syllabus code. You should check with your teacher which parts of this book are relevant to you.

Many of us find examinations among the most stressful experiences of our lives. This Coursebook aims to reduce the ‘fear factor’ associated with examinations. It will show you how careful preparation and effective revision can in fact increase your confidence and make the whole experience of examinations less stressful.

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### Key term

**Texts**, 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 types of text, such as letters and newspaper articles.

The book is in three parts:

**Part 1** ('Starting your Cambridge IGCSE Literature') introduces you to the study of Literature, to the Cambridge IGCSE Literature (English) syllabus, and explains how to get the most from using this Coursebook.

**Part 2** ('Building your skills') helps you to develop the skills you will need for reading and responding to a variety of **texts**: poems, short stories, novels and plays.

This part of the book also gives you practice in developing your writing skills. It is important that you master these writing skills, as your understanding of the texts you study will be tested through your written responses.

**Part 3** ('Preparing for assessment') takes a close look at the requirements of the various examination papers and of the coursework portfolio. This part of the Coursebook gives you specific guidance about how to write successful responses to questions, including advice about what examiners are looking for, and the criteria they use when awarding marks.

A **glossary** of key terms is provided for reference at the end of the book, and you should make good use of this.

Each of the Parts in the book is divided into Units. The content of each Unit is summarised below.

### 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: Cambridge IGCSE Literature: question types and assessment objectives

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

### Unit 3: Responding to Poetry

This is the first main study Unit, and it is best for you to read and work through this Unit before the Units on Prose and 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. This Unit will also introduce skills and learning strategies which you will go on to develop further in subsequent Units.

Whilst this Unit 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.

#### **Unit 4: Responding to Prose**

Except for one complete short story, the 'texts' for study in this Unit 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 Unit 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 the Poetry Unit, 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 this Unit will help you to consider the ways in which writers not only begin and develop stories but also how they 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.

#### **Unit 5: Responding to Drama**

The extracts in this Unit are from plays by Shakespeare, written over four hundred years ago, and also from plays written during the last century, reflecting the kinds of plays to be found on the syllabus.

The Activities and questions in this Unit will help 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.

#### **Unit 6: Developing effective writing skills**

With this Unit, you will begin to consider in greater detail the specific requirements of the syllabus, starting with effective writing strategies. How successful you are in the examination will depend on how effective you are at communicating your ideas *in writing*. It is essential that you devote

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enough time over the duration of the course to developing your writing skills. Remember that it is your written responses that will be assessed in the examination and also in Coursework assignments (if you are following that particular option).

In this Unit you will look at the different sorts of questions you will find on set texts examination papers, and be given advice on how to tackle them.



### Link

If you are preparing for the Unseen examination paper, you will not be doing Coursework. Likewise, if you are doing the Coursework option, you will not be preparing for the Unseen Paper.

### Unit 7: Preparing for the Unseen Paper

This Unit builds on the skills you will have already practised in the previous Units on Poetry, Prose and Developing writing skills.

There are *two* questions on the Unseen Paper:

- one on a poem (or extract from a poem)
- the other on a prose extract.

If you are doing this option, you only have to answer *one* question, and the choice is yours.

You may find the idea of an Unseen paper rather daunting because you cannot revise for this paper as you can for a Set Texts paper. This Unit aims to reassure you by reminding you that you will have developed and practised the necessary skills for responding to Poetry and Prose in your work on the Poetry and Prose set texts.

In addition, this Unit will suggest useful strategies for how to prepare for the Unseen Paper, as well as giving you practice in answering examination-type questions.

### Unit 8: Preparing for the Set Texts Papers

This Unit builds on what you will have learned in the previous Units, on responding to Poetry, Prose and Drama, and the development of your writing skills. It gives advice on how to revise your set texts effectively. Guidance is also provided on the different types of question that you will find in your Set Texts Papers, and how to prepare for these.

### Unit 9: Preparing for the Coursework portfolio

The skills for reading Poetry, Prose and Drama texts have been developed in earlier Units, and these skills are all relevant for the texts you will study if you are doing the Coursework component.

This Unit provides clear guidance about the requirements for Coursework and suggests effective strategies for planning and producing successful Coursework assignments.

## Active learning

This Coursebook covers all the requirements of your Cambridge IGCSE Literature course and the skills you need to achieve success. It is tempting to wish you 'Good luck', but in fact your success will depend more on the following:

- Detailed and thorough revision of your set texts
- Development and practice of key skills.

This Coursebook will help you to develop effective learning strategies and to develop and practise the skills necessary for your success in Cambridge IGCSE 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.
- 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! 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 indeed – 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 notes. 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 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** means to make notes providing *brief* explanations or comments.

## Activities

The Activities and guidance found in this Coursebook will help you to become better readers of texts. Together, they will encourage you to reflect not only on the content of what you read but also on the important role of

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the writer. Exploring the deliberate choices writers make in their writing will help you to sharpen your skills of analysis. It will also increase your enjoyment of the texts you study.

Various approaches to Activities are encouraged, including working in pairs and small groups as well as individual study.

In addition, you will find examples of students' responses to questions, together with feedback from an examiner.

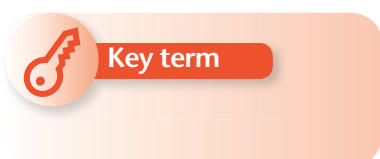
### Quick recap

In several of the Units, you will find 'Quick recap' sections. These provide a quick reminder of important key points that have just been covered in the Unit. They allow you time to reflect on what you have just learned, and to look again at any points you are not clear about.

### How to use the Coursebook features

You will find several different features on the pages of this Coursebook. These are there to help you as you progress through the book, and through your Literature course. They usually appear in the margins alongside the main text, and they often refer to something that is on the page.

Here is a list of the different features you will find as you use the book:



#### Key term

When a key term is used in the book for the first time, it is shown in **bold**, and defined nearby in a 'Key term' feature alongside the text. All key terms can also be found in the Glossary at the back of the book.



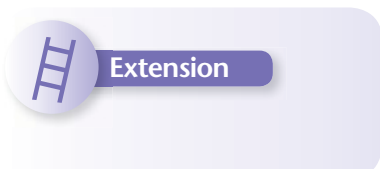
#### Link

These features refer you to other pages or Units in the Coursebook. You might, for example, be encouraged to go back and recap information or guidance provided earlier in the book, to remind yourself of what you learned in earlier Units. Ideas, terms and skills are often relevant to more than one Unit.



#### Tip

These features give you helpful advice and hints on studying, examinations and other aspects of your Literature course. These often build on the information given in the main text.



#### Extension

These features suggest useful learning Activities you could do on your own or perhaps working with another student. You are not required to do these activities, but they are there if you wish to have a go, and have the time to do them.

**Further Reading****Further Reading**

These features point you in the direction of other poems, plays and prose texts you may like to read for your own enjoyment or interest. You will be very busy during your IGCSE course, with other subjects as well as Literature, but you might find time to dip into some of the texts that are recommended. If you find something you like, you could return to reading it after you have finished your IGCSE course. Many students find that study of Literature at this level is just the beginning of a lifelong interest in reading.