

WEST AFRICAN SENIOR SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION  
LITERATURE-IN-ENGLISH

**PREAMBLE**

This syllabus is designed to enable candidates appreciate Literature as an important part of their overall educational process. In particular, the syllabus aims at enabling the students to cultivate critical skills as tools for independent assessment of human issues and the enjoyment and study of any Literature. It should help in moulding and forming their character morally and intellectually.

The syllabus will test candidates’

- (a) critical response to, and awareness of, how literature functions;
- (b) familiarity with the terms and concepts necessary for the appreciation of Literature;
- (c) ability to distinguish between types of Literature, their techniques of composition and modes of appeal;
- (d) competence in understanding literary texts at their various levels of meaning (e.g. surface, implied, etc.);
- (e) facility in responding imaginatively to literature through an effective and organized use of language.

**CONTENT OF THE PAPERS**

Candidates will be required to take three compulsory papers.

The total marks for the three papers will be 200 Marks.

PAPER 1 : 1¼ Hours – Multiple Choice/Objective Questions – 50 Marks (25%)

This paper will consist of 50 multiple-choice context and objective questions.

PAPER 2 : 2½ hours – Drama and Poetry : 100 Marks (50%)

This paper will be divided into four sections (A, B, C and D) and candidates must answer one question only from each section.

PAPER 3 : 1¼ hours – Prose : 50 Marks (25%)

This paper will be divided into two sections, A and B (African and Non-African Prose)

Candidates will answer two questions in all: one question from Section A (African Prose) and one question from Section B (Non-African Prose)

**DETAILED SYLLABUS**

Paper 1 – Multiple-Choice Objective and Context Questions

The aim of this paper is to test candidates’ knowledge of the prescribed Shakespearean text and general questions on literary appreciation. In this regard, candidates will be required to answer 50 compulsory objective and context type questions made up as follows:

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- (a) 20 questions on general knowledge of Literature:
- (b) 5 questions on one Unseen Prose Passage;
- (c) 5 questions on one Unseen Poem Passage;
- (d) 20 Objective/Context questions on a compulsory Shakespearean text recommended for study.
- (i) The Unseen Prose Passage will be about 120 – 150 words.
- (ii) Only context and objective questions will be set on the Shakespearean text. The context questions will test such items as theme, characterization, style and structure in the Shakespearean play. No essay question will be based on the recommended text.

PAPER 2 - African and Non-African Drama and Poetry

This paper will be made up of the Drama and Poetry components of the syllabus. It will be divided into four sections (A, B,C and D) and candidates will be required to answer four questions; one question must be answered from each of the four sections. The sections are as follows:

Section A	:	African Drama,
Section B	:	Non-African Drama,
Section C	:	African Poetry,
Section D	:	Non-African Poetry.

- (a) Questions on Drama will test candidates' detailed knowledge of the plays as works of art meant for the stage.
- (b) Questions on Poetry will test candidates' ability to recognize the means through which a poet communicates his feelings and ideas.
- (c) There will be two essay questions on each prescribed text and candidates will be expected to answer only one question from each text.

PAPER 3 – African and Non-African Prose

This paper will be divided into two sections as follows:

Section A	:	African Prose,
Section B	:	Non-African prose.

Two questions will be set on each of the novels recommended for study. Candidates will be required to answer one question only from each section.

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**NOTE**

- (a) The context questions will test such areas as theme, characterization, setting etc.
- (b) The questions on Drama will test candidates' detailed knowledge of the plays as works of art meant for the stage.
- (c) The questions on Poetry will test candidates' ability to recognize the various means through which a poet communicates his feelings and ideas.
- (d) The questions on Prose will test candidates' firm grasp of the structure of the work and the various means by which the writer dramatizes the experiences to make the work seem real.
- (e) For Papers 2 and 3, there will be two essay questions on each prescribed text and candidates will be expected to answer only one question from each prescribed text in the sections as contained in the rubrics.
- (f) No essay questions will be set on the compulsory Shakespearean text recommended for study. Only context and objective questions will be set on the text.

LIST OF SELECTED/SET BOOKS FOR THE WEST AFRICAN SENIOR SCHOOL  
CERTIFICATE LITERATURE-IN-ENGLISH EXAMINATION (WASSCE) FOR THE  
YEARS 2003 – 2005

PAPER 1 : Compulsory context and objective questions will be set on

(a) Literary Appreciation

(b) William Shakespeare : Merchant of Venice

PAPER 2 : Drama And Poetry

SECTION A : AFRICAN DRAMA

One of the following texts should be studied:

(i) Wole Soyinka : The Lion and the Jewel

(ii) James Ngugi : The Black Hermit

SECTION B : NON-AFRICAN DRAMA

One of the following texts should be studied:

(i) Richard B. Sheridan : The Rivals

(ii) T.S. Eliot : Murder in the Cathedral

SECTION C: AFRICAN POETRY

The following poems are to be studied :

(i) Lenrie Peters : "We have come home"

(ii) J. P. Clark : "Abiku"

(iii) Kwesi Brew : "The executioner's dream"

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- (iv) Syl. Cheney Coker : “Freetown”  
(v) Niyi Osundare : “Ours to plough, not to plunder”  
(vi) Jared Angira : “No coffin, no grave”.

RECOMMENDED POETRY ANTHOLOGIES CONTAINING THE SET POEMS

- (a) Poems of Black Africa, edited by Wole Soyinka;  
Heinemann’s African Writers Series.
- (b) A Selection of African Poetry;  
Introduced and Annotated by K. E. Senanu and T. Vincent (Longman)
- (c) Images and Impressions, K. Ogungbesan and D. Woolger (ed)  
Oxford University Press.
- (d) Poetry for Senior Secondary School;  
edited by A.E. Eruvbetine, Munzali Jibril, Silas Nnamonu, Obi Maduakor  
(Longman).
- (e) Niyi Osundare : The Eye of the Earth (Poems);  
Heinemann Frontline Series, Heinemann Educational Books, Nigeria Limited,  
Ibadan, 1986.
- (f) Poems from East Africa; edited by David Cook and David Rubadiri.
- (g) Crossings: A Senior Poetry Anthology, Macmillan 1998, Selected and  
Introduced by Annemarie Heywood.
- (h) Any Anthology containing the recommended poems.

SECTION D : NON-AFRICAN POETRY

The following poems are to be studied:

- (i) Robert Frost : “Two look at Two”  
(ii) William Soutar : “Elegy written in a Country Church-yard”  
(iii) W. Owen : “A Valediction : Forbidding Mourning”  
(iv) A. E. Houseman : “Is my team ploughing?”  
(v) Alfred Tennyson : “Ulysses”  
(vi) Percy Shelley : “Ode to the West Wind”.

RECOMMENDED POETRY ANTHOLOGIES CONTAINING THE SET POEMS

- (a) K. Ogungbesan and d. Woolger : Images and Impressions  
(OUP Ibadan)
- (b) M. Wollman : Ten Twentieth Century Poets  
(Harrap’s English Classics)
- (c) Annemarie Heywood : Crossings : A Senior Poetry Anthology,  
Macmillan, 1998.
- (d) Any Poetry Anthology containing the recommended poems.

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PAPER 3: PROSE

SECTION A : AFRICAN PROSE

One of the following texts should be studied:

- (i) Chinua Achebe : Anthills of the Savannah  
(ii) Ayi Kwei Armah : The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born

SECTION B : NON AFRICAN PROSE

One of the following texts should be studied:

- (i) Thomas Hardy : Tess of the D'Urbervilles  
(ii) Daniel Defoe : Robinson Crusoe

RECOMMENDED REFERENCE BOOKS

- S. H. Burton: - African Poetry in English (An introduction to practical criticism)  
C.J.H. Chacksfield (Macmillan)
- Isidore Okpewho - The Heritage of African Poetry (Longman)
- Ian Milligan - The Novel in English, An Introduction (Mctheun)
- Michael Etherton - The Development of African Drama (Metheun)
- Elizabeth Gunner: - A Handbook for Teaching African Literature
- Obi Maduakor - Introduction to Poetry
- Andrian A. Roscoe - Mother is God – A study in West African Literature
- R. N. Egudu - The Study of Poetry (University Press Ltd.)
- F. S. Clafimihan and - Comprehensive Approach to English Literature
- C. O. Williams - Evans Brothers (Nig. Publishers Limited)
- M. J. Murphy - Understanding Unseens; An Introduction to English Poetry and the English Novel for Overseas Students (G. Allen and Unwin Ltd.)
- Lewis Nkosi - Tusks and Masks (Themes and Styles of African Literature).
- Eustance Palmer - An Introduction to the African Novel
- Eustance Palmer - Studies on English Novel (A.U.P.)
- E N. Obiechina - Culture, Tradition and Society in the West African Novel (Cambridge)
- Okike Educational - Edited by Chinua Achebe  
Suppement
- Annamarie Heywood - Crossings: A Senior Poetry Anthology

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- Figuerda, John (ed) - An Anthology of African and Carribean Writing in English (Heinemann Educational Books). London, 1982
- Godwin, Ken - Understanding African Poetry: A Study of Ten Poets (Heinemann) London 1982
- Angmer, Charles - Contemporary Literature in Ghana 1911 – 1996 A Critical Evaluation, (Woeli Publication), Accra, 1996.
- Priebe R, et al, - Ghanaian Literature (Greenwood). New York, 1983
- Roscoe, Adrian - A Study in West African Literature (Cambridge University Press) London, 1971
- Ogungbesan, Kolawole (ed) - New West African Literature (Heinemann), London, 1979
- Robert Fraser- West African Poetry: A Critical History (Cambridge University Press) London .
- Taiwo, Oladele - An Introduction to West African Literature (Thomas Nelson and sons Ltd. Lagos, 1985
- Chinweizu, Onwuch Okwa, Mbabuike (eds) - Towards the Decolonization of African Fiction and Poetry and their Critics (K.P.I.) London, 1980
- Dathorne, O. R. - African Literature in the Twentieth Century (Heinemann) London
- Gunner, Elizabeth - A Handbook for Teaching African Literature (Heinemann). London, 1987
- Irele, Abiola - The African Experience in Literature and Ideology (Heinemann). London, 1981
- Lindfors, Bernth - Black African Literature in English – 1987 – 1991. (Hans Zell). London 1995
- Jones, Eldred Durosimi - African Literature Today : Retrospect and Prospect (Heinemann) London. 1979.
- Osundare, Niyi - The Eye of the Earth (Poems) Heinemann Frontline Series Heinemann Educational Books (Nig.) Limited Ibadan (1986).