

# **Briefing Session on Optimisation of Literature in English**

24 October 2023 (Tuesday)  
3:00 - 5:00 p.m.

# Programme

| Time             | Rundown   |
|------------------|---|
| 3:00 - 3:10 p.m. | Rationale and measures for optimising the Literature in English curriculum and assessment   |
| 3:10 - 3:30 p.m. | Major updates on the <i>Literature in English Curriculum and Assessment Guide (Secondary 4 - 6) (2023)</i> and <i>2026 Literature in English SBA Teachers' Handbook</i> |
| 3:30 - 4:20 p.m. | Comments on student performance in film-based SBA portfolios - by Mrs Catherine LI, Supervisor of SBA   |
| 4:20 - 4:30 p.m. | Break   |
| 4:30 - 4:50 p.m. | Q & A session   |
| 4:50 - 5:00 p.m. | Concluding remarks and evaluation   |

# Part 1

## Rationale and measures for optimising the Literature in English curriculum and assessment

# Background

Announcement of optimisation of the four senior secondary core subjects in Education Bureau Circular Memorandum No. 39/2021 “Measures to Optimise the Four Senior Secondary Core Subjects”

To **create space for students** and **cater for learner diversity**

Review of the curriculum and assessment of the elective subjects, including Literature in English, along **the same directions**

Optimising arrangements for Literature in English were formulated with a view to:

- ✓ maintaining the **integrity of the existing curriculum**
- ✓ facilitating more **focused learning and teaching**
- ✓ catering for **learner diversity** and making the subject more **manageable and appealing to students of different ability levels**

## Consultation

- Feb 2023: **Questionnaires** sent to 32 schools (100% response rate)
- Mar 2023: A **focus group meeting** with curriculum leaders from 9 schools
- May 2023: A **joint meeting of the CDC-HKEAA Committee & Subject Committee**

## Implementation

From **S4** in the **2023/24 school year** (i.e. **2026 HKDSE Examination**)

3

4

2

1

## Formulation of Optimisation Plan

**Deliberation and discussion** in CDC-HKEAA and HKEAA Subject Committees from Dec 2021 – Dec 2022

## Announcement of Optimising Measures and Updating of the Literature in English Curriculum and Assessment Guide (2023)

10 Jul 2023:  
EDBCM No. 120/2023

# Optimising Measures for Literature in English – The Curriculum

| Curriculum components                              | Optimising measures   |
|--|---|
| Study of Set Texts                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lesson time allocation <b>reduced from 60% to 55%</b></li><li>• <b>No set texts specified for the film genre</b> to allow teachers flexibility to use any suitable texts (including films previously used as set texts) to develop students' film knowledge and analytical skills for the School-based Assessment portfolio</li></ul> |
| Portfolio<br>(Group work/<br>Individual tutorials) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lesson time allocation <b>increased from 15% to 20%</b></li><li>• Focusing on <b>an extended essay or an analytical study on film only</b> to facilitate focused learning and teaching and effective use of lesson and learning time</li></ul>  |

\*The “Literary Appreciation” component of the curriculum remains unchanged.

# Optimising Measures for Literature in English - Public Assessment

| Assessment components                                    | Optimising measures  |
|--|--|
| Paper 1:<br>Essay Writing<br>(50% of total subject mark) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Removing the film section</b></li> <li>• <b>Removing Part II</b> (i.e. <b>cross-genre comparison questions</b>*)</li> <li>• Completing three essays, one on each of the three genres (i.e. novel, play and short stories)</li> </ul> |
| Paper 2: Appreciation<br>(30%)                           | Providing <b>only one unseen poem</b> in Section C instead of two  |
| School-based Assessment (20%)                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focusing on <b>films only</b></li> <li>• Removing the options of <del>critical review</del> and <del>creative writing</del>, with <b>analytical study or extended essay as the only choice</b></li> </ul>                               |

\*Candidates are still required to demonstrate cross-text comparison skills in the section on short stories in Paper 1 and the section on seen poetry in Paper 2.

## **Part 2**

**Major updates on the *Literature in English Curriculum and Assessment Guide (Secondary 4 - 6) (2023)* and *2026 Literature in English SBA Teachers' Handbook***



# Major Updates in *Literature in English Curriculum and Assessment Guide (Secondary 4-6) (2023)*

- Incorporating **the latest changes and directions in curriculum development** and **the major updates** (e.g. the Seven Learning Goals, values education, media and information literacy) to align with the central curriculum guides
- Providing information on the **optimising measures** on the Literature in English curriculum and assessment (including **allocation of lesson and learning time, refinement of curriculum content, streamlined design of the examination papers and SBA**) and relevant suggestions on curriculum planning, learning and teaching (e.g. use of e-learning tools and AI technology, citation and referencing skills)
- Updating the **sample question items** provided in the Appendix to reflect the optimised assessment design

## Chapter 2: Curriculum Framework

### 2.4 Learning Objectives (P.9)

Updated  
generic  
skills &  
values and  
attitudes

Generic skills enable students to learn how to learn. They include:

| Basic Skills         | Thinking Skills          | Personal and Social Skills |
|----------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| Communication Skills | Critical Thinking Skills | Self-management Skills     |
| Mathematical Skills  | Creativity               | Self-learning Skills       |
| IT Skills            | Problem Solving Skills   | Collaboration Skills       |

These skills are to be developed through learning and teaching in all the KLAs. To a large extent, they are embedded in the curriculum content of Literature in English. Collaboration, communication, creativity, critical thinking, problem solving and self-learning skills are in particular nurtured through its delivery.

#### *Values and Attitudes*

Values underpin our conduct and decisions. Attitudes are personal dispositions, which may affect our behaviour positively or negatively. Students need to develop positive attitudes such as responsibility, open-mindedness and co-operativeness for healthy development. Among all values and attitudes, perseverance, respect for others, responsibility, national identity, commitment, integrity, care for others, law-abidingness, empathy and diligence have been identified as the ten priority values and attitudes.

## Chapter 3: Curriculum Planning

### 3.1 Guiding Principles (P.12)

Aligned with the  
Seven Learning  
Goals

#### 3.1 Guiding Principles

The Literature in English curriculum allows for flexibility and innovation in curriculum planning. The choice as to which skills and areas of the curriculum to highlight, and the freedom to choose very different types of text, allow for considerable diversity in the planning and development of school-based curricula tailored to different situations and groups of students. When planning and developing their own Literature in English curricula, schools and teachers are encouraged to:

- aim for a balanced and comprehensive coverage of the learning targets and objectives, ensuring that the learning activities offered to students help them develop equally in terms of Knowledge of Literary Forms and Conventions, Appreciation and Response, and Language Enhancement, rather than focus on any one of these strands at the expense of the others;
- address the Seven Learning Goals of Senior Secondary Education and incorporate other curriculum initiatives (e.g. values education, Language across the Curriculum), where appropriate, in the curriculum;

## Chapter 3: Curriculum Planning

### 3.4.2 Collaboration with Other KLAs (P.17)

Cross-curricular learning: Making authentic links with other KLAs

Literature in English can work in collaboration with other subjects to support whole-school initiatives such as values education. Appropriate literary texts could be chosen to highlight selected and values (e.g. empathy, care, respect), thereby deepening students' understanding and reflections on them. Literature in English can play a role in supporting cross-curricular learning, capitalising on the unique features of the subject (e.g. extensive reading and viewing, interaction with literary works and cultural texts).

## Chapter 2: Curriculum Framework

### 2.2 Curriculum Structure and Organisation (P.6)

#### Suggested lesson time allocation

Literature in English, as an elective subject, accounts for about 10% of the total lesson time\* in the senior secondary curriculum. Lesson time should be allocated according to students' needs with due consideration of their strengths and weaknesses. Equal emphasis should be placed on the various genres of prose, poetry, drama and film that students are required to study in the subject, and sufficient time should be allocated for initiating desired responses from students and providing advice and support on portfolio work and other related learning activities.

The following is a suggested time allocation for the Literature in English curriculum:

|   | Percentage of lesson time |
|---|---------------------------|
| • Study of Set Texts                          | 55%                       |
| • Literary Appreciation                       | 25%                       |
| • Portfolio (Group work/Individual tutorials) | 20%                       |

\* Starting from Secondary 4 in the 2021/22 school year, the four senior secondary core subjects are optimised to release lesson time for flexible arrangements to cater for learner diversity. Under the optimising arrangements, it is recommended that the four senior secondary core subjects take up no more than half of the total lesson time, while the elective subjects (including Applied Learning and Other Languages) should take up no less than 20% of the total lesson time and Other Learning Experiences (OLE) no less than 10%. For more information, please refer to *the Supplementary Notes to the Secondary Education Curriculum Guide (2017)*.

As always, the amount of time spent in learning and teaching is governed by a variety of factors, including whole-school curriculum planning, students' abilities and needs, students' prior knowledge, teaching and assessment strategies, teaching styles and the number of subjects offered. Schools should exercise professional judgement and flexibility over time allocation to achieve specific curriculum aims and objectives as well as to suit students' specific needs and the school context.

## Chapter 3: Curriculum Planning

### 3.1 Guiding Principles (P.12)

Flexible and  
effective use  
of time

- make flexible use of time released from the optimisation to facilitate more focused learning and teaching, in-depth discussion of literary texts and self-expression through engaging students in creative writing;
- provide opportunities for students to extend learning beyond the classroom (e.g. students research and project work, participating in literary events and competitions) to make effective use of learning time and develop students' self-directed learning skills;
- collect and reflect on evidence of effective learning and teaching to inform curriculum development;

#### 3.3.7 Flexible Use of Learning Time

As mentioned in Chapter 2, schools can allocate about 10% of the total lesson time to Literature in English at the senior secondary level. However, learning time include not only lesson time (teacher-student contact hours in classroom settings), but also time outside class at school (such as recess, lunch breaks, after-school time, open days, examination days) and time spent outside school including holidays. Schools should, therefore, holistically plan and arrange students' learning time so as to develop their self-directed learning skills. In addition to the time allocated for instructional lectures, discussions, group work, etc. to be conducted with the teacher and students together, a significant amount of studying and learning should also take place outside the classroom, e.g. reading texts, viewing films, and undertaking course work and other activities. Schools are strongly encouraged to make flexible use of the learning time during and outside school hours to facilitate learning and teaching. Schools can:

### 3.3.7 Flexible Use of Learning Time (P.16)

## Chapter 3: Curriculum Planning

### 3.5 Progression (P.17-18)

Planning on the learning and teaching of films

In accordance with the recommendation in **the Secondary Education Curriculum Guide (2017)** that the curriculum should be designed to help students progress smoothly through the three years of senior secondary education, a teaching schedule is proposed below. In S4, students are introduced to the literary forms of short story, poetry and drama through examining selected set texts from each of these genres. In S5, while students may continue to explore some of these forms, they will also start reading the set novel and working on the portfolio, as well as doing literary appreciation of both seen and unseen passages of prose, poetry and drama. In S6, students will continue examining the set texts they have not yet completed in S5. **In addition to literary appreciation, they will also work extensively on the film genre for the development of their portfolio work for the SBA.** For details of the SBA, please refer to Section 5.5.4.

The following table provides suggestions on how the teaching of the subject could be done:

| <i>Year</i> | <i>Contents</i>   |
|-------------|---|
| S4          | Set texts from short stories, poetry and drama  |
| S5          | Set poems, short stories and novel, literary appreciation and <b>portfolio work on film</b> |
| S6          | <b>Set novel, literary appreciation and portfolio work on film</b>                          |

The suggested schedule is developed on the basis that students are first introduced to the literary genres they are more familiar with (i.e. those which they have been exposed to at the junior secondary level, such as the short story, poetry and drama). Progressively they examine the “relatively less familiar” genres (such as film) and take on the demanding tasks of literary appreciation and **developing an academic paper as part of the portfolio work.** However, the suggested schedule is not a hard-and-fast rule to be rigidly followed. Important factors such as students’ interests and abilities, and teachers’ preferences and priorities, should be taken into consideration in working out the most appropriate arrangement for individual schools.

## Chapter 4: Learning and teaching

### 4.3.4 Film (P.45)

Learning and teaching of films

#### 4.3.4 Film

Film, as the genre in focus for the SBA of the subject, is included for study because of the many characteristics it shares with other literary genres (drama and prose fiction, in particular) – e.g. the use of symbolism and foreshadowing, the effects of point of view, and plot and theme development. To these are added sound and vision, which distinguishes film from the other genres and makes it a unique and powerful medium capable of stimulating students' senses and cognitive faculties, enlarging their cultural knowledge and understanding, and adding variety to the curriculum. The choice of films for discussion and SBA portfolio is not restricted to those based on literary works. Instead, films are selected on the principles of interest, depth and literary merit.



# Chapter 4: Learning and Teaching

## 4.2 Guiding Principles (P.23)

Use of AI

- **Flexible and judicious use of resources:** Schools are encouraged to enhance learning in Literature in English, sustain students' interest and broaden their learning experiences through flexible use of a variety of resources, both print and non-print. Also, relevant community resources should be tapped to provide students with opportunities for life-wide learning. However, students should be made aware of the risks of using the information on the Internet, which may be incomplete, inaccurate or biased. Searching information on the Internet or using artificial intelligence (AI) generative tools is not a substitute for reading the original literary works, reference books and journal articles, which are more reliable sources of information.

## Chapter 6: Effective Use of Learning and Teaching Resources

### 6.3.4 The Internet and Other Technologies (P.90)

Use of AI

#### 6.3.4 The Internet and Other Technologies

Informational technology (IT) is an effective tool for enhancing the study of literature. The Internet, for instance, is a powerful resource that can be exploited for searching for information for a project, accessing online literature resources, and visiting interactive websites and virtual classrooms for pleasurable self-directed learning. Teachers may also consider using multi-media resources and IT tools such as e-books and apps to enhance students' motivation and extend their learning experience. However, given their range in terms of quality and accessibility, care should be exercised in the choice of these materials. Good multi-media and IT resources should:

- involve good models of English use;
- be designed in a user-friendly way, with graphics, sound and animation designed to increase students' motivation and support learning; and
- promote interactive learning by encouraging learner contributions, allowing students to work at their own pace and providing feedback to them.

While Chatbots and AI text generation tools may help students generate ideas on literary texts, including the films students may work on in the SBA, the use of such tools for literary analysis and research should also be treated with caution. Efforts should be made to guide and remind students to:

- verify and critically assess the accuracy and reliability of information;
- identify and cite the source of ideas and information;
- avoid over-reliance on the AI generated content; and
- develop original responses to the texts by close reading of the original literary works, critically analysing all information collected and expressing ideas in their own words.

## 5.2 Formative and Summative Assessments

In the context of the Literature in English curriculum, assessment serves the principal aim of promoting learning by providing information about students' achievements in relation to the learning targets and objectives. Assessment helps students, their teachers and parents understand the learning performance and progress, facilitating planning for further improvement. To match the learning targets, objectives and outcomes, different modes of assessment serving formative and/or summative purposes are encouraged in the Literature in English curriculum.

Formative assessment focuses on the ongoing evaluation of students' performance and abilities. It is often informal and carried out during the learning process. Formative assessment, which typically involves close attention to small "chunks" of learning, may take place on a daily basis.

The main aim of formative assessment is to improve learning and teaching through:

- diagnosing students' strengths and learning problems or difficulties;
- providing quick guidance, quality feedback, timely support and enrichment for students; and
- reviewing and improving teaching plans and strategies.

Summative assessment focuses on determining progress in learning and evaluating students' performance and abilities. It is normally undertaken at the end of a period of instruction (e.g. end of a school term, a school year or a key stage of schooling) and reviews much larger "chunks" of learning. Its main purposes are to:

- provide a comprehensive summary of students' learning achievements during the period and their performance at that particular point of time; and
- help teachers check whether the major aspects of the learning targets and objectives have been achieved.

### *Assessment of, for and as Learning*

Summative assessment is closely related to "assessment of learning", while formative assessment comprises "assessment for learning" and "assessment as learning". The table below explains the three complementary assessment concepts, their relationship and the different purposes they serve.

# Chapter 5: Assessment

## 5.2 Formative and Summative Assessments (P.77-78)

Schools are encouraged to extend formative assessment from "assessment for learning" to "assessment as learning", which empowers students to reflect on their own learning and develop their habit of mind and skills to monitor and evaluate their own progress. Teachers are also advised to adopt more diversified modes of assessment and make the best use of assessment data to inform learning and teaching.

Extending from  
Assessment *for* to  
*as* Learning

## Chapter 5: Assessment

### 5.5.4 School-based Assessment (SBA) (P.85-86)

Advice for teachers on supervising the SBA

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.

In the process of guiding students to develop their piece of writing for the SBA, teacher-assessors should:

- advise students on the choice of film(s) and topic for the analytical study or essay;
- provide guidance to students on the responsible, ethical and legal use of research tools and reference materials, as well as the proper citation of sources of information, including AI generated sources to avoid plagiarism, which the HKEAA has cautioned candidates against and would cause grave consequences;
- teach students how to approach a research task and evaluate the usefulness, relevance and accuracy of material they have found;
- track students' progress over time, check their understanding of their work regularly, provide timely feedback for students to review and improve their writing over drafts; and
- keep students' SBA work and learning records 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.

# Chapter 6: Effective Use of Learning and Teaching Resources

## 6.3.3 EDB Resource Materials in Support of the Curriculum Development (P.89)

New resources available for use

### 6.3.3 EDB Resource Materials in Support of the Curriculum Development

A variety of print and electronic resource materials have been developed by the Education Bureau to support the implementation of the Literature in English curriculum at the senior secondary level, including:

- Learning and teaching resources (e.g. *The Learning and Teaching of Poetry (Senior Secondary): A Resource Package*, *A Guide to Writing and Referencing for Literature in English School-based Assessment*, *Resource Materials on the Learning and Teaching of Poetry and Film*)
- EDB Educational MultiMedia (EMM) videos and resources (e.g. *Between the Lines: Hong Kong Poetry in English*)
- Resources in support of student activities and competition (e.g. Poetry Remake Competition)

# Appendices

## Appendix 1 A Sample List of Set Texts (P.93)

Revised Sample  
List of Set Texts

### Appendices

#### Appendix 1

#### A Sample List of Set Texts

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.

# Appendices

## Appendix 4

### Preparing for the Public Examination

#### Examples of typical comparison questions (P.111)

1. Compare and contrast two short stories in terms of how they use narrative structure.
2. *Araby* tells the story of a young man's powerful desire. Compare and contrast the theme of desire in *Araby* and one other short story.
3. A good story requires a clearly defined closing. Discuss this view with reference to at least two of the short stories.
4. Discuss how women are presented in any two of the short stories.

Revised examples  
of comparison  
questions

#### Notes on the questions

1. The question asks for a comparison of the techniques and craft of storytelling in two short stories. It is necessary to discuss the two stories in parallel rather than dealing with each in isolation. Different focuses and aspects can be identified for a meaningful comparison, such as the plot development, the opening and ending, the use of narrative techniques and sequences like flashbacks and flash-forwards. The impact created by the use of such techniques should also be discussed.
2. The question requires a comparison at the thematic level. Different approaches can be adopted and the theme could be discussed in relation to age, gender, plot, mood, characters and so on. Whether the desires are fulfilled and how they impact on the main characters and plot development can also be discussed. Where appropriate, how the desires are presented (e.g. with the use of symbolism) can also be part of the analysis.
3. This question involves the comparison of different types of endings (e.g. close vs. open or ambiguous endings, resolved vs. unresolved endings) and suitable stories have to be selected to highlight the difference and support the arguments. It could be argued that not all good stories require a clearly defined closing, then other factors and criteria for evaluating the overall effectiveness of a short stories have to be suggested. For a meaningful discussion and comparison to happen, it may be necessary to define what "a good story" is at the beginning of the essay and lay down some criteria for evaluation.
4. This question asks for a comparison of the presentation of women in two short stories. It may be important to identify two stories in which women characters play a prominent role, though minor and supporting characters in stories can also be discussed. The presentation of women can be compared in terms of their family, gender and social roles, their qualities and attributes, their conflicts with other characters and society, how they cope with the conflicts and their overall image in the texts (e.g. heroine or victim). The hidden messages and purposes of creating such female characters (e.g. to subvert gender stereotypes, to critique male dominance in a patriarchal society) can also be discussed in the essay.

# The Updated 2026 Literature in English SBA Teachers' Handbook

- ▶ <https://www.hkeaa.edu.hk/DocLibrary/SBA/HKDSE/SBAhandbook-2026-LITE.pdf>





## Part 3

For comments on student performance in film-based SBA portfolios, please click on this link:

[https://www.hkeaa.edu.hk/en/hkdse/assessment/subject\\_information/category\\_a\\_subjects/hkdse\\_subj.html?A2&2&17\\_5](https://www.hkeaa.edu.hk/en/hkdse/assessment/subject_information/category_a_subjects/hkdse_subj.html?A2&2&17_5)

# Part 4

## Q & A Session

# Part 5

## Concluding remarks and evaluation