

**APPRECIATION OF ENGLISH LITERARY TEXTS**

**GCE O/L**

**NEW SYLLBUS**

**(from 2015 onwards)**

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## **Introduction**

This new syllabus for Appreciation of English Literary Texts for the GCE O/L year 10-11 was undertaken with a team of experts in the field of English Literature who were teachers, teacher trainers, syllabus designers, poets and novelists. The syllabus includes a wider range of material taken from diverse ethno-cultural-social backgrounds with the intention of introducing students to an array of metaphors, meanings and experiences. The material also transcends time by actively blending past and present in its selection of material. In short, the syllabus attempts to disseminate a rich experience of the diversity of life through carefully selected material.

## **National Goals**

- (i) Nation building and the establishment of a Sri Lankan identity through the promotion of national cohesion, national integrity, national unity, harmony, and peace, and recognizing cultural diversity in Sri Lanka's plural society within a concept of respect for human dignity.**
- (ii) Recognizing and conserving the best elements of the nation's heritage while responding to the challenges of a changing world.**
- (iii) Creating and supporting an environment imbued with the norms of social justice and a democratic way of life that promotes respect for human rights, awareness of duties and obligations, and a deep and abiding concern for one another.**
- (iv) Promoting the mental and physical well-being of individuals and a sustainable life style based on respect for human values.**
- (v) Developing creativity, initiative, critical thinking, responsibility, accountability and other positive elements of a well-integrated and balanced personality.**
- (vi) Human resource development by educating for productive work that enhances the quality of life of the individual and the nation and contributes to the economic development of Sri Lanka.**
- (vii) Preparing individuals to adapt to and manage change, and to develop capacity to cope with complex and unforeseen situations in a rapidly changing world.**
- (viii) Fostering attitudes and skills that will contribute to securing an honorable place in the international community, based on justice, equality and mutual respect.**

## Basic Competencies

The following Basic Competencies developed through education will contribute to achieve the above National Goals.

### (i) Competencies in Communication

Competencies in communication are based on four subsets: Literacy, Numeracy, Graphics and IT proficiency.

Literacy:	Listen attentively, speak clearly, read for meaning, write accurately and lucidly and communicate ideas effectively.
Numeracy:	Use numbers for things, space and time, count, calculate and measure systematically.
Graphics:	Make sense of line and form, express and record details, instructions and ideas with line form and colour.
IT proficiency	Computer literacy and the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) in learning, in the work environment and in personal life

### (ii) Competencies relating to personality Development

- Generic skills such as creativity, divergent thinking, initiative, decision making, problem solving, critical and analytical thinking, team work, inter – personal relations, discovering and exploring ;
- Values such as integrity, tolerance and respect for human dignity;
- Emotional intelligence.

### (iii) Competencies relating to the Environment

These competencies relate to the environment: social, biological and physical.

Social Environment - Awareness of the national heritage, sensitivity and skills linked to being members of a plural society, concern for distributive justice, social relationships, personal conduct, general and legal conventions, rights, responsibilities, duties and obligations.

Biological Environment - Awareness, sensitivity and skills linked to the living world, people and the ecosystem, the trees, forests, seas, water, air and life – plant, animal and human life.

Physical Environment -

Awareness, sensitivity and skills linked to space, energy, fuels, matter, materials and their links with human living, food, clothing, shelter, health, comfort, respiration, sleep, relaxation, rest, wastes and excretion.

Included here are skills in using tools and technologies for learning, working and living.

**(iv) Competencies relating to preparation for the World of Work.**

Employment related skills to maximize their potential and to enhance their capacity.

- To contribute to economic development.
- To discover their vocational interests and aptitudes,
- To choose a job that suits their abilities, and
- To engage in a rewarding and sustainable livelihood.

**(v) Competencies relating to Religion and Ethics**

Assimilating and internalizing values, so that individuals may function in a manner consistent with the ethical, moral and religious modes of conduct in everyday living, selecting that which is most appropriate.

**(vi) Competencies in Play and the Use of Leisure**

Pleasure, Joy, emotions and such human experiences as expressed through aesthetics, literature, play, sports and athletics, leisure pursuits and other creative modes of living.

**(vii) Competencies relating to ‘learning to learn’**

Empowering individuals to learn independently and to be sensitive and successful in responding to and managing change through a transformative process, in a rapidly changing, complex and interdependent world

## **General Objectives of the syllabus**

### **Aims**

- Gains new knowledge and experience
- Develops critical reading and organized writing skills
- Develop skills to express, communicate, defend and share opinions
- Stimulate imagination and cultivate insight into human affairs
- Develop an awareness about creative writing and learn the basics of creative writing
- Objectives

### **Grade 10**

- Be aware of the theme and various aspects of it globally and discretely.
- Be sensitive to other human beings.
- Be familiar with the various genres of literature.
- Appreciate language.
- Learn to recite and dramatize poems with the help of CDs.
- Learn to understand a meaning from the context; infer meaning.
- Summarize meaning in one's own words.
- Respond to texts with feelings of empathy and detachment.

### **Grade 11**

- Develop and enhance humanity and human experience
- Think critically
- Learn to respect other cultures
- Distinguish of different styles/ genres of writing
- Encourage further study of literature
- Write critical essays.
- Literature because of its ability to freeze on a text ethno-social-cultural-economic and gendered experiences of human beings is able to match the given list of objectives in a teaching-learning situation. Literature transcends competencies in its textual resistance and representation of human experience. As a result, any teacher who sensitively grasp and disseminate the human experience in a poem and a prose would automatically be addressing the specified objectives. Therefore, we have deliberately avoided restricting the syllabus material into a series of competencies.

## **Significant changes**

### **Themes**

- The thematic approach for literature design is accepted after the experience of the previous syllabuses. However, we have expanded the scope of the themes in the present syllabus. The ‘war and violence’ as theme had been expanded to ‘conflict’ which gave us a wider range of experiences to explore. ‘Society’ poems have been diversified to include themes other than mortality – the new selection explores issues like freedom, commercialization of the mind and ethnic tensions. The ‘humor’ poems drive the reader back into their own life, keeping in mind the Freudian theories of laughter.

### **Time**

- The material covers a large span of time from classical to the modern. The syllabus deliberately attempted to be inclusive with regard to the cannon as well as the works of writers who are not in the cannon. Thus in the same space we have included Keats, Dickinson, Tennyson, Dickens as well as Abeysekera, Gooneratne, Symborska and Narayan.

### **Span**

- The syllabus has representative samples from a wide span of socio-cultural-ethnic experiences in its selection of material. There are works from Czechoslovakia, India, Sri Lanka, Japan, Africa, Britain and France.

### **Religion**

- The syllabus has deliberately left out material that had a religious flavor. Religion could be found in the backdrops of some works, but those backdrops hardly has a bearing on the main themes of the work concerned

### **Asian Experience**

- The syllabus also includes a generous sample of works from local contexts. Sanghakkara’s speech addresses the issues of war, cricket, violence and ethnic harmony; Deraniyagala’s Tsunami memoir depicts life-threatening experiences; Abeyseker’s novel brings to the foreground the love between a boy and a dog; and Kinoshita’s play demonstrates the conflict between human emotions and money.

### Proposed Breakdown of the Syllabus

Grade	Term	Scheme of Work	Periods
10	1	<b><u>Poetry</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Eagle</li> <li>• To the Evening Star</li> <li>• Farewell to Barn Stack and Tree</li> </ul> <b><u>Prose</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Lumber Room</li> <li>• The Lahore Attack</li> </ul>	35
	2	<b><u>Poetry</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Big Match- 1983</li> <li>• The Terrorist ,He's Watching</li> <li>• The Clown's Wife</li> <li>• The Huntsman</li> </ul> <b><u>Prose</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Nightingale and the Rose</li> </ul> <b><u>Novel</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One out of three to be selected.</li> </ul>	35
	3	<b><u>Poetry</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To the Nile</li> <li>• A Bird came Down the Walk</li> <li>• Breakfast</li> <li>• Once Upon a Time</li> </ul> <b><u>Prose</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extract from Wave</li> </ul> <b><u>Drama</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Bear</li> </ul> <b><u>Novel</u></b>	35
11	1	<b><u>Poetry</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I know Why the Caged Bird Sing</li> <li>• War is Kind</li> <li>• Richard Cory</li> <li>• The Camel's Hump</li> </ul> <b><u>Drama</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Twilight of a Crane</li> </ul>	35
	2	<b><u>Poetry</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Earthen Goblet</li> <li>• Father and Son</li> <li>• Upside Down</li> </ul> <b><u>Drama</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Twilight of a Crane</li> </ul> <b><u>Novel</u></b>	35
	3	<b><u>Poetry</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fear</li> <li>• Two's company</li> </ul> <b><u>Novel</u></b>	



## 4.0 Teaching Methodology

There are no established or accepted approaches to the teaching of literature. In language teaching of course one can list a dozen or so approaches or methods starting with grammar translation, extending to suggestopaedia and Total Physical Response. Teaching literature can also be viewed as a process - a process of developing skills of reading to gain critical insight. A literary text is a multi-layered artifact and hence needs complex skills of understanding. Inference, interpretation and evaluation are the highest levels of this reading process. These heights cannot be reached without the fundamental skills of comprehension for which the basic skills of reading for gist, guessing meaning from context and understanding co textual reference are crucial. Any practical approach to teaching literature must enhance fast reading skills. Reading 'fluency' as Brumfit and Carter (1990) call it, 'the basic minimum'

A certain amount of writing is available about the skills required for a serious study of literature [Spiro 1990] which are presented as (a) global (b) discrete (c) specific skills. The development of these skills can be visualized as the route of literary education. But one cannot think of it as a linear or streamlined one. What educationist must not do is to tie up the teaching of literature to any particular approach or method. The creativity of the learner must not be hindered in any way. This goes for the teacher as well. But it seems to be a useful exercise to consider the following competencies /skills based approach put forward by Spiro (1990).

- a) Understanding plain sense. (comprehension )
- b) Understanding the context
- c) Learning to empathize (express feeling )
- d) Learning to appreciate
- e) Learning to be creative

One can see how they parallel the comprehension, inference, interpretations and evaluation paradigm.

Whichever way one considers them, they have to be developed over time. It may not be possible to reach 'depth' at G.C.E. (O/L) which is the initial or beginning stage for the study of a second literature .but the route must be tread by any serious teacher or learner . To summarize them the methodology would comprise the development of

- a) Fast reading skills
- b) Skills of inference or reading between the lines
- c) Learning to respond to the text
- d) Learning to look at text creatively / critically.

## **5. Performance Evaluation**

Appreciation of English literary texts is tested as a component of the G.C.E. (O/L) examination formatively as well as summatively at the end of a two year course of study. At school level it is assessed formally at term tests. It is also assessed informally in the classroom using a variety of techniques both oral and written. Conventionally literature is tested by written examinations. The test items most frequently used are the context question and the critical essay. The context question is more effective since it directly tests the candidate's familiarity with the texts. The critical essay tests the variety of skills listed in 4.0 above. The two types of items require assessment tools which are presented as criteria detailed out in band descriptors. (G.C.E. (O/L) Marking Scheme)

At term tests candidates are tested formally using the criteria detailed out at the national examination. The school based assessment takes a more informal nature. A variety of assessment tasks can be used. They are:

- dramatizations
- recitations
- group presentations
- debates
- creative writing sessions
- posters/ drawings
- simulations
- role plays
- questions of different types

Assessment tools for each of these activities may have to be developed. In using such tools the skills/ competencies listed in 4.0 must be considered.

## **6. Supportive Materials**

There would be two types of supportive materials

1. Print
2. Electronic

### **1. Print**

- A teacher's guide with comprehensive guidelines to teach the prescribed texts in the syllabus
- Additional reading materials for the teacher's use

### **2. Electronic**

- A CD for the poems
- A CD /DVD for the two dramas

## **Learning Outcomes**

- Distinguish different literary genres.
- Learners are able to read literary texts with sensitivity and understanding
- Enjoy reading literary texts
- Develop critical reading and thinking skills
- Respond to literary texts sensitively and extend the experience to their own lives
- Respond to events in life with understanding, sympathy, and empathy
- Write organized texts using language competencies acquired
- Distinguish between books considered literary texts and others

## **8. Recommended Extra Events to Develop English Literature Skills**

- English day activities
- English literature camps
- Poetry reciting competitions-(Intra/Inter school)
- Drama competitions-(Intra/Inter school)
- English Speaking clubs
- Literary Associations
- Assemblies conducted in English
- Debates on social issues -(Intra/ Inter school/house)
- Class libraries/school libraries/
- Creative writing- writing stories
- Book clubs, book readings

## 9. Syllabus Contents

### Poetry

#### a. Nature

- |                              |                        |
|------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. To the Nile               | - John Keats           |
| 2. A Bird Came Down the Walk | - Emily Dickinson      |
| 3. The Eagle                 | - Alfred Lord Tennyson |
| 4. To the Evening Star       | - William Blake        |

#### b. Conflict

- |                                        |                                                               |
|----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. War is Kind                         | - Stephen Crane                                               |
| 2. The Terrorist, He's Watching        | - Wislawa Syzmborska                                          |
| 3. Farewell to Barn and Stack and Tree | - A.E. Housman                                                |
| 4. Breakfast                           | - Jacques Prevert( <i>translated by- Reggie Siriwardena</i> ) |

#### c. Society

- |                                   |                            |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Once upon a Time               | - Gabriel Okara            |
| 2. I know Why the Caged Bird Sing | - Maya Angelou             |
| 3. Richard Cory                   | - Edwin Arlington Robinson |
| 4. Big Match 1983                 | - Yasmin Goonerathne       |

#### d. Life

- |                       |                               |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. The Earthen Goblet | - Harindranath Chattopadhyaya |
| 2. Father and Son     | - Cat Stevens                 |
| 3. Fear               | - Gabriela Mistral            |
| 4. Clown's Wife       | - John Agard                  |

#### e. Humour

- |                     |                     |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| 1. The Camel's Hump | - Rudyard Kipling   |
| 2. Upside Down      | - Alexander Kushner |
| 3. The Huntsman     | - Edward Lowbury    |
| 4. Two's Company    | - Raymond Wilson    |

#### f. Prose

- |                                 |                       |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. The Nightingale and the Rose | - Oscar Wilde         |
| 2. The Lahore Attack            | - Kumar Sangakkara    |
| 3. Lumber Room                  | - Saki                |
| 4. An extract from "Wave"       | - Sonali Deraniyagala |

#### e. Drama

- |                        |                           |
|------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Twilight of a Crane | - Yu Zuwa Junji Kinoshita |
| 2. The Bear            | - Anton Chekov            |

#### f. Novels

- |                              |                    |
|------------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. The Prince and the Pauper | - Mark Twain       |
| 2. Bringing Tony Home        | - Tissa Abeysekara |
| 3. Vendor of Sweets          | - R.K Narayan      |

## Curriculum Grid – Grades 10 & 11

Grade	Objective	Contents (texts)	Learning Outcomes
<b>Grade 10</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be sensitive to other human beings.</li> <li>• Be familiar with the various genres of literature.</li> <li>• Appreciate language.</li> <li>• Learn to recite/ dramatize poem with the help of CDs.</li> <li>• Learn to understand meaning from context (infer) meaning.</li> <li>• Summarize text in one's own words.</li> <li>• Respond to text with appropriate feelings.</li> <li>• Writes own notes on texts read.</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Poetry</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Eagle.</li> <li>• To the Evening Star.</li> <li>• Farewell to Barn and Stack and Tree.</li> <li>• Big match 1983.</li> <li>• The Terrorist: He's watching.</li> <li>• The Clown's Wife.</li> <li>• The Huntsman.</li> <li>• To the Nile.</li> <li>• A Bird Came Down the Walk.</li> <li>• Breakfast.</li> <li>• Once upon a time.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Prose</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Lumber Room.</li> <li>• The Lahore Attack.</li> <li>• The Nightingale and the Rose.</li> <li>• Extract from Wave.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Drama</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Bear</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Novel</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Selected Novel</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read literary texts with sensitivity and understanding.</li> <li>• Distinguish one type of literary text from another.</li> <li>• Enjoy reading literary texts.</li> <li>• Develop critical reading skills.</li> <li>• Develop critical thinking skills.</li> <li>• Respond to literary texts sensitively.</li> <li>• Empathize with literary texts.</li> <li>• Writes creatively.</li> </ul>
<b>Grade 11</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be familiar with the various genres of literature.</li> <li>• Appreciates language.</li> <li>• Be aware of the different themes, issues raised therein and their relationships to the wider human context.</li> <li>• Respond to texts and enhance their own humanity and human experiences.</li> <li>• Learn to respect other cultures.</li> <li>• Think critically.</li> <li>• Distinguish different styles of writing.</li> <li>• Write critical essays.</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Poetry</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I know Why the Caged Bird Sing.</li> <li>• War is Kind.</li> <li>• Richard Cory.</li> <li>• The Camel's Hump.</li> <li>• Earthen Goblet.</li> <li>• Father and Son.</li> <li>• Upside Down.</li> <li>• Fear.</li> <li>• Two's company.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Drama</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Twilight of a Crane.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Novel</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Selected novel.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reads literary texts with sensitivity and understanding.</li> <li>• Understands the distinguishing feature of poetry, drama and fiction.</li> <li>• Reads critically, think critically.</li> <li>• Respond to literary texts sensitively and extend the experience gained therein to their own lives.</li> <li>• Respond to events in life with understanding, sympathy and empathy.</li> <li>• Distinguish between literary texts and others.</li> <li>• Write critical essays.</li> </ul>