



**Circular Number: 0016/2024**

**To: Boards of Management, Principal Teachers and Teaching Staff of Post-Primary Schools, Special Schools and Chief Executives of Education and Training Boards (ETBs).**

## **Prescribed Material for the Leaving Certificate English Examination in 2026**

The Department of Education wishes to inform the management authorities of second-level schools that the attached lists include the prescribed material for the Leaving Certificate English Examination in June 2026.

The Department requests school authorities to bring this circular to the attention of all English teachers. School authorities and teachers should note that while this is a list of prescribed texts, no specific text is compulsory, although at Higher Level one of the listed Shakespeare plays must be studied.

The Department reminds schools that any use of these texts in Transition Year should be in accordance with the Department's published guidelines on the content of the Transition Year programme.

The Department requests school authorities to give adequate notice of these texts to students before the start of the relevant school year.

This Circular can be accessed on [www.gov.ie](http://www.gov.ie).

Enquiries regarding this Circular should be e-mailed to [CAP@education.gov.ie](mailto:CAP@education.gov.ie)

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## Prescribed Material for the Leaving Certificate English Examination in 2026

As the syllabus indicates, students are required to study:

- One text for study on its own – See 1 below
- Three other texts for comparative study – See 2 below
- A selection of poetry – See 3 below

**Texts chosen for study must be from this list.**

**At Higher Level a play by Shakespeare must be one of the texts chosen.**

This can be studied on its own or as an element in a comparative study.

**At Ordinary Level the study of a play by Shakespeare is optional.**

1. **One text on its own** from the following texts: -

BRONTË, Anne	The Tenant of Wildfell Hall (H/O)
HANSBERRY, Lorraine	A Raisin in the Sun (O)
KEANE, John B.	Sive (O)
MILLER, Arthur	The Crucible (H/O)
O'FARRELL, Maggie	Hamnet (H/O)
RASH, Ron	The Cove (O)
SHAKESPEARE, William	Macbeth (H/O)
STOKER, Bram	Dracula (H/O)
WHITEHEAD, Colson	The Underground Railroad (O)

N.B. Texts marked H/O may be studied at Higher Level or at Ordinary Level.

Texts marked O may be studied only at Ordinary Level.



**2. Three other texts in a comparative manner, according to the comparative modes prescribed for this course.**

- Any texts from the list of texts prescribed for comparative study, **other than the one already chosen for study on its own**, may be selected for the comparative study.
- In this list, texts are in three broad categories: novel and memoir; drama; and film. At Higher Level and at Ordinary Level, a film may be studied as **one** of the three texts in a comparative study. **Only the texts identified on the list as films may be studied as films.**

**The Comparative Modes for Examination in 2026 are:**

<u>Higher Level</u>	(i)	Cultural Context
	(ii)	General Vision and Viewpoint
	(iii)	Literary Genre
<u>Ordinary Level</u>	(i)	Social Setting
	(ii)	Relationships
	(iii)	Hero, heroine, villain



**List of Texts prescribed for comparative study, for examination in the year  
2026**

**Novel / Memoir**

ADICHIE, Chimamanda Ngozi	Purple Hibiscus
AUSTEN, Jane	Pride and Prejudice
BARKER, Pat	The Silence of the Girls
BARRETT, Colin	Young Skins
BRONTË, Anne	The Tenant of Wildfell Hall
BUI, Thi	The Best We Could Do
CHANDLER, Raymond	The Big Sleep
DOERR, Anthony	All the Light We Cannot See
DU MAURIER, Daphne	Rebecca
GARMUS, Bonnie	Lessons in Chemistry
GREGORY, Tom	A Boy in the Water
HARDY, Thomas	The Mayor of Casterbridge
KEEGAN, Claire	Small Things Like These
McCORMACK, Mike	Notes from a Coma
O'FARRELL, Maggie	Hamnet
OWENS, Delia	Where the Crawdads Sing
PINEIRO, Claudia	Elena Knows
RASH, Ron	The Cove
STOKER, Bram	Dracula
WHITEHEAD, Colson	The Underground Railroad



## **Drama**

CARR, Marina	Girl on an Altar
EURIPIDES	Medea
HANSBERRY, Lorraine	A Raisin in the Sun
KEANE, John B.	Sive
Mc MAHON, Phillip	Once before I go
MILLER, Arthur	The Crucible
WADE, Laura	Colder Than Here
SHAKESPEARE, William	Macbeth
	The Merry Wives of Windsor

## **Film**

ANDERSON, Wes	The Grand Budapest Hotel
DARABONT, Frank	The Shawshank Redemption
ERGÜVEN, Deniz Gamze	Mustang
GERWIG, Greta	Barbie
JOHNSON, Rian	Knives Out
KAPADIA, Asif	Diego Maradona
KAZAN, Elia	On the Waterfront
McDONAGH, Martin	The Banshees of Inisherin



### 3. Poetry

#### Higher Level

A selection from the poetry of **eight** poets is prescribed for Higher Level.

Students will be expected to have studied **at least six poems** by each poet.

#### Ordinary Level

A total of **36 poems** is prescribed for Ordinary Level.

#### Poets prescribed for higher level 2026

BISHOP, Elizabeth

The Fish  
The Bight  
At the Fishhouses  
The Prodigal  
Questions of Travel  
The Armadillo  
Sestina  
First Death in Nova Scotia  
Filling Station  
In the Waiting Room

DONNE, John

The Sunne Rising  
Song: Go, and catch a falling star  
The Anniversarie  
Song: Sweetest love, I do not goe  
The Dreame (Deare love, for nothing less than thee  
...)  
A Valediction Forbidding Mourning  
The Flea  
Batter my heart  
At the round earth's imagined corners  
Thou hast made me

ELIOT, Thomas S.

The Lovesong of J. Alfred Prufrock



Preludes  
Aunt Helen  
    *from The Waste Land II. A Game of Chess*  
Journey of the Magi  
    *from Landscapes*  
III Usk  
IV Rannoch, by Glencoe  
    *from The Four Quartets East Coker IV*

HEANEY, Seamus

The Forge  
Bogland  
The Tollund Man  
Mossbawn: Two Poems in Dedication (1) Sunlight  
A Constable Calls  
The Skunk  
The Harvest Bow  
The Underground  
Postscript  
A Call  
Tate's Avenue  
The Pitchfork  
Lightenings viii (The annals say ...)

MEEHAN, Paula

Buying Winkles  
The Pattern  
The Statue of the Virgin at Granard Speaks  
Cora, Auntie  
The Exact Moment I Became a Poet  
My Father Perceived as a Vision of St. Francis  
Hearth Lesson  
Prayer for the Children of Longing  
Death of a Field  
Them Ducks Died for Ireland

NÍ CHUILLEANÁIN, Eiléan

Lucina Schynning in Silence of the Nicht  
The Second Voyage



Deaths and Engines  
Street  
Fireman's Lift  
All for You  
Following  
Kilcash  
Translation  
The Bend in the Road  
On Lacking the Killer Instinct  
To Niall Woods and Xenya Ostrovskaia, married in  
Dublin on 9 September 2009

SMITH, Tracy K.

Joy (Elegy 1)  
Dominion over the beasts of the Earth  
The Searchers  
Letter to a Photojournalist Going In  
The Universe is a House Party  
The Museum of Obsolescence  
Don't you wonder, sometimes?  
It's Not  
The Universe as Primal Scream  
The Greatest Personal Privation  
I am 60 odd years of age - *from* I will tell you the truth  
about this, I will tell you all about it  
Ghazal

YEATS, William Butler

The Lake Isle of Innisfree  
September 1913  
The Wild Swans at Coole  
An Irish Airman Foresees his Death  
Easter 1916  
The Second Coming  
Sailing to Byzantium  
*From Meditations in Time of Civil War:*  
VI, The Stare's Nest by My Window  
In Memory of Eva Gore-Booth and Con Markiewicz





Swift's Epitaph  
An Acre of Grass  
*from Under Ben Bulbin: V and VI*  
Politics

### Poetry prescribed for ordinary level 2026

ADCOCK, Fleur	Advice to a Discarded Lover
BISHOP, Elizabeth	The Prodigal Filling Station
BROWNING, Elizabeth Barrett	How Do I Love Thee?
BRYCE, Colette	Mammy Dozes
CLANCY, Kate	Driving to the Hospital
DONNE, John	The Flea Song: Go, and catch a falling star
DOVE, Rita	Summit Beach, 1921
ELIOT, T.S.	Preludes Aunt Helen
HEANEY, Seamus	A Constable Calls The Underground A Call
KEEGAN, Colm	Memorial
MEEHAN, Paula	Buying Winkles Hearth Lesson Prayer for the Children of Longing
MULDOON, Paul	The Loaf
NÍ CHUILLEANÁIN, Eiléan	Street To Niall Woods and Xenya Ostrovskaja, married in Dublin on 9 September 2009



NYE, Naomi Shihab	Kindness
OLIVER, Mary	When I am Among the Trees
POE, Edgar Allan	The Raven
SHELLEY, Percy Bysshe	Ozymandias
SHUTTLE, Penelope Zoo	Morning 16
SMITH, Tracy K	It's Not The Greatest Personal Privation The Searchers
TRAYNOR, Jessica	The Artane Band
WILLIAMS, William Carlos	This is Just to Say
WRIGHT, James	Lying in a Hammock at William Duffy's Farm in Pine Island, Minnesota
YEATS, William Butler	The Lake Isle of Innisfree The Wild Swans at Coole An Irish Airman Foresees his Death
ZEPHANIAH, Benjamin	The Sun