



Circular Number: 0024/2026

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 2028

The Department of Education and Youth 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 2028.

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 published Transition Year Programme Statement. 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.

Enquiries regarding this Circular should be e-mailed to CAP_Helpdesk@education.gov.ie

**Celeste O'Callaghan
Curriculum and Assessment Policy Unit
02 March 2026**



Prescribed Material for the Leaving Certificate English Examination in 2028

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: -

CARR, Marina	Girl on an Altar (H/O)
DONOGHUE, Emma	Room (O)
FITZGERALD, F. Scott	The Great Gatsby (H/O)
HANSBERRY, Lorraine	A Raisin in the Sun (O)
KEANE, John B.	Sive (O)
O'FARRELL, Maggie	Hamnet (H/O)
SHAKESPEARE, William	Hamlet (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 2028 are:

Higher Level

- (i) Literary Genre
- (ii) Theme or Issue
- (iii) Cultural Context

Ordinary Level

- (i) Hero, Heroine, Villain
- (ii) Theme
- (iii) Social Setting



**List of texts prescribed for comparative study, for examination in the year
2028**

Novel / Memoir

BARKER, Pat	Silence of the Girls
BARRETT, Colin	Young Skins
BRONTË, Anne	The Tenant of Wildfell Hall
BRONTË, Emily	Wuthering Heights
BUI, Thi	The Best We Could Do
DONOGHUE, Emma	Room
ELIOT, George	Silas Marner
FITZGERALD, F. Scott	The Great Gatsby
GARMUS, Bonnie	Lessons in Chemistry
HOSSEINI, Khaled	The Kite Runner
KEEGAN, Claire	Small Things Like These
MCCORMACK, Mike	Notes from a Coma
O'FARRELL, Maggie	Hamnet
ORWELL, George	1984
OWENS, Delia	Where the Crawdads Sing
PINEIRO, Claudia	Elena Knows
RYAN, Donal	The Spinning Heart
STOKER, Bram	Dracula
WHITEHEAD, Colson	The Underground Railroad
WINTERSON, Jeanette	Why Be Happy When You Could Be Normal?



Drama

CARR, Marina	Girl on an Altar
HANSBERRY, Lorraine	A Raisin in the Sun
IBSEN, Henrik	A Doll's House
KEANE, John B.	Sive
Mc MAHON, Phillip	Once Before I Go
MILLER, Arthur	All My Sons
SHAKESPEARE, William	Hamlet
	Othello
WADE, Laura	Colder Than Here

Film

ANDERSON, Wes	The Grand Budapest Hotel
CUARÓN, Alfonso	Children of Men
GERWIG, Greta	Barbie
GRANIK, Debra	Winter's Bone
JOHNSON, Rian	Knives Out
KAPADIA, Asif	Diego Maradona
MCDONAGH, Martin	The Banshees of Inisherin
REED, Carol	The Third Man
SALVATORE, Gabriele	I'm Not Scared



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 2028

DICKINSON, Emily

“Hope” is the thing with feathers
There’s a certain Slant of light
I felt a Funeral, in my Brain
A Bird came down the Walk
I Heard a fly buzz – when I died
The Soul has Bandaged moments
I could bring You Jewels – had I a mind to
A narrow Fellow in the Grass
I taste a liquor never brewed
After great pain, a formal feeling comes

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

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...)

HOPKINS, Gerard Manley

God's Grandeur
Spring
As kingfishers catch fire, dragonflies draw flame
The Windhover
Pied Beauty
Felix Randal
Inversnaid
I wake and feel the fell of dark, not day
No worst there is none. Pitched past pitch of grief
Thou art indeed just, Lord, if I contend

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 Night
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

PLATH, Sylvia

Black Rook in Rainy Weather
The Times Are Tidy
Morning Song
Finisterre
Mirror
Pheasant
Elm
Poppies in July
The Arrival of the Bee Box
Child

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 for 2028

ADCOCK, Fleur	Advice to a Discarded Lover
ANGELOU, Maya	When Great Trees Fall
BARRETT BROWNING, Elizabeth	How Do I Love Thee?
CARVER, Raymond	The Juggler at Heaven's Gate
CLARKE, Austin	New Liberty Hall
COLERIDGE, Samuel Taylor	Kubla Khan
DICKINSON, Emily	I felt a Funeral, in my Brain I Heard a fly buzz – when I died
DONNE, John	The Flea Song: Go and catch a falling star
DOVE, Rita	Summit Beach, 1921
FRENCH, Tom	Night Drive
GIOVANNI, Nikki	They Clapped
GROARKE, Vona	Away
HEANEY, Seamus	A Constable Calls The Underground A Call
HOPKINS, Gerard Manley	Spring Inversnaid
HUGHES, Ted	The Thought Fox
MEEHAN, Paula	Buying Winkles Hearth Lesson Prayer for the Children of Longing
NÍ CHUILLEANÁIN, Eiléan	Street



To Niall Woods and Xenya
Ostrowskaia, married in Dublin on 9
September 2009

O'DONOGHUE, Bernard

Ter Conatus

PLATH, Sylvia

Poppies in July
Child
The Arrival of the Beebox

SMITHER, Elizabeth

On the euthanasia of a pet dog

SZYMBORSKA, Wislawa

In Praise of My Sister

WILLIAMS, William Carlos

This Is Just To Say

YEATS, William Butler

The Lake Isle of Innisfree
The Wild Swans at Coole
An Irish Airman Foresees his Death

ZEPHANIAH, Benjamin

The Sun