



*For Performance Measurement*

**ZIMBABWE SCHOOL  
EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL  
(ZIMSEC)**

**ORDINARY LEVEL SYLLABUS  
2013 – 2018**

**Literature in English (2013)**

## **1.0 RATIONALE**

### **1.1 The changes in the O-Level Literature in English syllabus are intended to make the study of Literature confirm to changes taking place in the educational system of Zimbabwe and to:**

- 1.1.1 streamline the syllabus such that it is consistent with, and gives relevant background to the Advanced Level Literature in English Syllabus;
- 1.1.2 stimulate an interest in Zimbabwean literature and a broad range of works literature in order to help pupils learn about themselves and their society, as well as other societies and experiences;

## **2.0 APPROACH**

The study of literature will focus on the artistic and aesthetic qualities of imaginative prose, poetry and drama, the social context, the writer's overall world-view and the pupils' response to this. An interest in literature will develop an important learning, component outside the requirements of examinations in promoting awareness of values, morals and attitudes.

## **3.0 AIMS**

**The aims of the syllabus are:-**

### **3.1 To develop reading abilities and skills that:**

- 3.1.1 are useful for everyday life, e.g. reading instructions, newspapers, reports;
- 3.1.2 are essential for reading books on various subjects across the curriculum; including appropriate techniques for intensive and extensive reading;
- 3.1.3 will motivate pupils to develop a life-long reading habit.

### **3.2 To stimulate**

- 3.2.1 an enjoyment and appreciation of the artistic and aesthetic qualities of literature;
- 3.2.2 analysis, comment and informed judgement on a literary text, and the ability to learn and develop from the experiences depicted in literature;
- 3.3.3 the pupil's interest to enable them to express themselves creatively in imaginative writing.

### **3.3 To develop in all the pupils an interest in literature**

- 3.3.1 as a social product, reflecting the political, economic, scientific and technological life of a people, and promoting certain values, morals and attitudes;
- 3.3.2 as a means of self-knowledge, national identity, and knowledge of other people and cultures.

#### **4.0 ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES**

- 4.1 demonstrate first-hand knowledge of the content of literary texts;**
- 4.2 demonstrate an understanding of literary texts in ways which may range from a grasp of their surface meaning to a deeper awareness of their themes and attitudes;**
- 4.3 recognize and appreciate ways in which writers use language;**
- 4.4 recognize and appreciate other ways in which writers achieve their effects (e.g. structure, plot, characterization, dramatic tension, imagery, rhythm, setting and mood);**
- 4.5 communicate a sensitive and informed personal response to what is read.**

The relationship between the Assessment Objectives and the components of the Scheme of Assessment and the weighting of the Assessment Objectives are shown in the following grid.

The objectives are weighted to give an indication of their relative importance, rather than to provide a precise statement of mark allocations to particular objectives.

These Assessment Objectives are inter-related and it will not normally be possible or desirable to test them in isolation.

<b>Assessment Objective (Paragraph 4 Above)</b>	<b>Overall Weighting</b>
1	20
2	20
3	20

4	20
5	20
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>

## 5.0 DETAILED NOTES OF GUIDANCE FOR TEACHERS

At the O-Level examination, candidates should be able to address themselves to four aspects of a set text, viz:

- (a) Story
- (b) Characters
- (c) Society and social background
- (d) Themes and values

Dealing with these four aspects demand a number of skills, which are listed below as skills objectives.

### 5.1 General Objectives

The candidates should be able to:

- 5.1.1 understand surface meaning;
- 5.1.2 understand a deeper meaning (if appropriate);
- 5.1.3 understand the writer's message/intentions/values/attitudes;
- 5.1.4 appreciate the mood/atmosphere/tone of a poem, episode or situation in a prose-work or play;
- 5.1.5 make a personal response to a literary work – by relating it to the candidate's own experiences; - by relating it to contemporary society; - by saying why the candidate likes or dislikes the work;
- 5.1.6 understand the values/attitudes of people in a literary work.

### 5.2 Specific Objectives: In relation to story, characters, society and social background, themes and values, the candidate should be able to attempt the following:

## **Story**

- 5.2.1 narrate the sequence of events in the set text;
- 5.2.2 recognize the plot of the work;
- 5.2.3 evaluate the importance of a particular event towards some given aspect of the set text;

## **Characters**

- 5.2.4 identify and describe main characters, and distinguish them from minor characters;
- 5.2.5 outline a character from the candidate's point of view;
- 5.2.6 relate the characteristics of people in the set text to people in the candidate's own experience;
- 5.2.7 trace the development of a character;
- 5.2.8 evaluate the importance of a particular quality in the total character of a person in the set text;
- 5.2.9 evaluate the contribution of a character towards some given aspect of the set text;
- 5.2.10 evaluate a character from the point of view of other characters and in relation to the setting of the text;

## **Society and the social setting**

- 5.2.11 describe the social background of the set text;
- 5.2.12 relate the social background to incidents in the text;
- 5.2.13 discuss the social background from the perspective of a character in the text;
- 5.2.14 contrast the socio-political setting in the text with that of the candidate's own society;

## **Themes and values**

- 5.2.15 state the theme(s) of a set text, with reference to the work;
- 5.2.16 discuss the various themes;
- 5.2.17 relate the theme(s) and values of a text to the candidate's own life, and to problems and issues in contemporary society;
- 5.2.18 discern the writer's own values with reference to the work.

## **5.3 Literary Techniques**

In their answers to questions on literature, candidates should be able to recognize and comment on the effect of, for example, imagery, symbolism, satirical and ironic language. In their answers to poetry questions, candidates should be able to recognize and comment on the effect of such literary devices as rhyme and alliteration, and other common poetic devices.

## **6.0 SCHEME OF ASSESSMENT**

### **6.1 Paper One (2½ hours) (100%)**

SECTION A	African Literature
SECTION B	World Literature

Candidates must answer **four** questions, on **three** texts: one from which must be a play. Candidates must choose **one** text from Section A and **one** text from Section B. The remaining text may be chosen from **either** Section A or Section B.

There will be three questions on each text, the first of which will be a text-based question. All questions carry the same total mark.

## **6.2 PRESCRIBED TEXTS**

Prescribed texts will be advised in examination circulars on a yearly basis. It is, however, important to always refer to the syllabus for all other syllabus requirements.