The New Senior Secondary Curriculum for Sierra Leone

Subject Syllabus for English Literature, Drama and Poetry (Core)
Subject stream: Languages and Literatures

This subject syllabus is based on the National Curriculum Framework for Senior Secondary Education. It was prepared by national curriculum specialists and subject experts.

SSSC
Senior Secondary School Curriculum

Syllabus for English Literature, Drama and Poetry (a Core Subject)

Subject Description

English literature as defined here means creative work by writers – whose home language is English.   The study of English Literature will deepen pupil knowledge of the historical, social, political, and economic issues that inform specific content and involves close analysis of whole texts and extracts from novels, poems and plays.

Rationale for including English literature, drama and poetry in the Senior Secondary School Curriculum

a. To raise awareness about the authenticity of English literature as forms of "canonical" texts. Canonical means work divided into different categories representing different periods, authors, geographical locations, and cultural influence.
b. To create understanding of how English literature developed, from the Medieval period to Victorian period, reflecting thematic focus and trends.
c. To provide a platform for learners to experience different types of English literature.
d. To provide learners with an opportunity to explore various language styles which will help improve personal English language competence.

General Learning Outcomes

The following are some of the Core Learning outcomes of teaching English literature:

- Thinkers who are open minded, have global awareness of life and who can empathize with others about their own and other cultures.
- Critical, independent readers who are perceptive, can appreciate English literature for its aesthetic values and appreciate meaning in a social and historical context.
- Readers who are capable of analysing and deconstructing different types of texts.
- Convincing communicators who can demonstrate critical thinking, make convincing interpretations of texts, and   explain and explore structures through their reading responses.

The novel
A brief introduction to English literature, focusing on Elizabethan and Victorian literature, emphasizing; theme, content, focus and style.

Novel writers to be studied include: – Charlotte and Emily Bronte, Charles Dickens, Robert Louis Stevenson, George Orwell, Jane Austin, William Golding – The focus should be on analyzing the effectiveness and relevance of the title; the impact of the opening; the way in which the novel is structured and ends; how the characters (lead and minor) are developed, and the use of literary devices used and their effects.

Generic approach to studying a novel
The following topics should be covered with the whole class, but opportunities should be made for both group and individual work:
- Assessing a book by its cover through analysing titles and graphic presentation
- Exploring openings and endings
- Close reading of the opening chapter
- Identify and analyse the relative importance of the characters
- Develop critical appreciation of whole text or different sections of it
- Explore the plot and the themes within the book and make meaningful connections
- Relate theme/ style and language to the social and historical context
- Make meaningful connections between the theme, background information and context
- Show reflective practice through understanding, and perceptive engagement with texts

Drama
To include texts by the following authors - William Shakespeare, Christopher Marlowe, Harold Pinter, Ben Johnson

Drama teaching can be undertaken through class reading, performing and watching recordings of actual productions when available and should focus on different types of drama, major and minor characters, the division into acts and scenes, identification of underlying themes, Dramatic devices and their effects, stage directions and their importance.

Generic approaches to studying a play
- A brief examination of the way theatre developed in England
- Major and minor characters, character flaws
- The play's main theme and or themes (jealousy, revenge, loss, witchcraft, love, hate, pride, modesty, ambition, redemption)
- The flow of the action and the connection between the beginning and ending of a play
- Dramatic devices and their potential effects, for example what is dramatic irony?
- The importance of the soliloquy (long speech by one main character) exits and entrances.
- If watching an actual production comment on stage lighting, sound, props
- The impact of the play on different audiences
- Close analysis of an extract of a play

Poetry
To include poems by the following poet - William Blake, John Donne, T S Eliot, Percy Bysshe Shelley, John Milton, Wilfred Owen, Alfred Lord Tennyson

Poetry teaching should include demystifying a poem by identifying the type of poem, the explicit and implicit themes, the poetic devices used and their effects (simile, metaphor, personification, rhyme pattern, rhythm)

The Generic approach to studying poetry
- Identification of different types of poems – *Lyrical*: elegy, ode, sonnet; *Dramatic*: dramatic monologue, soliloquy, oration, character sketch; *Narrative* – ballad, epic, social; other special types of poetry - haiku, limerick; free style, blank verse
- selection and close reading of a poem – analyzing the title, the opening and ending lines; identifying the type of a poem, the theme, poetic devices used and their intended impact on readers, including, simile, metaphor, irony, rhyme, rhythm t
- the Social and historical context of a poem – the background of the poet, his/her culture and influences portrayed in the work in question; the poet's craft – choice of words, style of writing idiosyncratic to him or her
- discussion of different responses to a specific poem – using the point, evidence, explain structure in a written response to show understanding of a part of a poem; using the point, evidence, explain, explore structure to show understanding, perceptive and insightful engagement with a whole poem.
- Unseen poetry – an opportunity to respond to a poem or poems not studied before; write a detailed analysis of each poem, focusing on language, theme, style, the social and historical context
- Encourage learners to write their own poems - an opportunity to experiment with writing a blank verse or a rhymed poem on a topic of choice

Teaching Syllabus

Note that content in this syllabus is not given for each level of Senior Secondary Education.

Topic, Theme or Unit	Expected learning outcomes	Recommended teaching methods	Suggested resources	Assessment of learning outcomes
Introduction to Macbeth - An overview of Shakespearean Tragedy	Learners will be able to: • Explain the meaning of tragedy. • Identify and comment on examples of tragic flaw in heroes of other tragic plays or novels, or in real life.	• Plenary interaction • Research • Demonstration • Question & answer • Discussion	PowerPoint slides on Social and Historical context of the play Relevant extracts of materials on social & historical context of the play	Homework on characteristics of Shakespeare's tragedies.
Act 1 Scene 1&2	Learners will be able to: • Explain the place of witches during Shakespeare's time • Speculate and predict what the play might be about.	• Close reading of the text • Watch a clip of the relevant scene • Question and Answer • Think, Pair and Share	PowerPoint slides on the place of witches in Shakespeare's era The Polanski edition DVD of Macbeth; Text of the play or extract of the scene.	Learners to answer the questions: What does "Fair is Foul, and foul is Fair" mean? What does the saying suggest about the witches and their predictions?
Meeting Macbeth in Act 1 scene 3 & 4	Learners will be able to describe the character of Macbeth as the play progresses, from before he meets the witches	• Close reading • Watch a clip of the relevant scene	Relevant quotes on how Macbeth is described by other characters to help build his profile	Use a spider-gram, to show how Shakespeare reveals Macbeth's character over the life of the play
Explore the use of soliloquy as a dramatic device	Learners will be able to explain the purpose of a soliloquy as a dramatics device	• Plenary interaction • Pair group work • Think, pair, share	Extracts of Soliloquys in Act 1 of the play	Analyze Macbeth's soliloquy in Act 1 Scene 4, beginning with "Two truths are told…" showing what it reveals about his character.

Appreciating Setting and atmosphere	Learners will be able to describe the effects of setting and atmosphere on readers by analysing the physical description and the emotional tone it evokes	• Annotating stage directions. • Modelling • Question and Answer • Pair group work	Extracts from the play Text of the play. PowerPoint slides on social & historical context of the play	Annotate an extract of the play showing setting and atmosphere (Act 1 Scene 6+7)
Explore and Analyse characters – Lady Macbeth	Learners will be able to explain how characterization is achieved through writers' craft by analysing what the character says, what others say about them and how they act	• Watch clips of relevant scenes • Question & answer • Group work • Think, pair, share	DVD clips of Macbeth Extracts or the text of the play PowerPoint slides on Lady Macbeth	Compare and contrast the characters of Macbeth & Lady Macbeth
Appreciating the pace of plot development	Learners will be able to: • Analyse conflict and explain how it drives the plot forward. • Explore the effects of plot development on readers / audience	• Question and Answer • Think, Pair, Share • Pose, pause, pounce	Handouts on plot and subplots of the play	Draw a flow Chart showing the way in which Macbeth's character is revealed as the play progresses
Dramatic Irony and its impact as a dramatic device in the play	Learners will be able to: • Explain the difference between irony and dramatic irony (where the audience knows something the characters do not) • Apply irony in own writing • Identify and comment on the effects of dramatic irony in the play • Analyse the overall impact of dramatic irony on Shakespeare's audience.	• Questioning • Think, Pair share • pose, pause, pounce • Brainstorming • PowerPoint slides • Modelling	DVD of the play, Extracts and text of the play.	Compose a short story with an ironic twist.

Identify and comment on the key theme of the play	Learners will be able to: • Explore the writers' beliefs and perspectives and provide supporting evidence from the text • Recognise the significance of the social and historical context of the play • Develop a paragraph on the theme of evil and its consequences.	• Spider-gram and brainstorming • Research • Modelling and scaffolding • Class discussion	DVD of the play PowerPoint slides Relevant Questions Handout on beliefs during Elizabethan England.	Write a detailed Point, Evidence, Explain, (PEE) paragraph illustrating convincing understanding of how the play would have appealed to an Elizabethan audience. A PEE paragraph is the basic structure of a clear, analytical paragraph: P = the point sentence i.e. the main theme or idea of the paragraph E = evidence (or example) i.e. a direct quote from a text, a clear example E = explanation i.e. a deeper level of meaning, why it is important or effective
Introduction to British Poetry	Learners will be able to discuss selected poems by different British poets	• Lecture method • Question and Answer • Brainstorm	Gaskin C (1997) Teaching Poetry for KS4 (English) BBC Bitesize Key Stage 4 (equivalence of Senior Secondary Education)	Research the Historical context of selected British Poets: Simon Armitage Emily Bronte, William Blake, Lord Byron, Wilfred Owen, Alfred Lord Tennyson

'Remains' by Simon Armitage	Learners will be able to discuss the effects of style on readers by analyzing diction, figurative language, and point of view	• Close textual analysis • Question & answer • Pair / group work	Copies of the poem DVD clip of the poem 'Ideas for Approaching a Poem: a Number of Questions and Activities for Students to Complete when Studying a new Poem.'	Annotate the rest of the poem, highlighting diction, figures of speech, imagery and rhyme pattern.
Appreciate the writer's craft	Learners will be able to: • Discuss the characteristics that set the poet apart from others • Recognize and demonstrate insight and engagement with the poems impact	• Think, Pair, share, • Pose, pause, pounce • Modelling & scaffolding	Copies of the poem Example of a Point, Evidence, Explain paragraph on an aspect of the poem 'Remains' – language & style.	Develop an analytical paragraph on how the poet's uses language, rhythm, and style to achieve impact.
Explore the themes in Conflict poems by Simon Armitage	Learners will be able to: • Appreciate of the theme of conflict in a poem • Identify elements of conflict in these poems	• Modelling and scaffolding • Group work	Examples of Quotations Samples of a Point, Evidence, Evidence Paragraph on theme	Independent work. Develop A PEE Paragraph on appreciating 'Remains' by Simon Armitage
Introduction to 'Exposure' by Wilfred Owen	Learners will be able to deduce the theme of a poem by examining the title, the opening and final lines.	• Whole class discussion • Individual work	Background Notes on poems by Wilfred Owen	Homework - use the internet Google.com to research about Wilfred Owen and some of his poems.
Close analysis of the Poem 'Exposure'	Learners will be able to annotate the poem to identify ways in which the poet uses diction, style, and figurative language	• Pair/ group work, Think, Pair, Share • Pose, pause, pounce • Presentations.	Copies of the poem PowerPoints slides of a sample of annotation.	Complete a table showing the literary devices used in the poem and the effect on the reader.
Explore the theme of Conflict in Exposure	Learners will be able to identify and articulate the main theme of the poem by using textual	Modelling and scaffolding	Provide an example of an effective PEE paragraph	

	evidence to demonstrate insight and engagement with the text.			
Consolidating and composing a detailed personal response to a poem	Learners will be able to write a detailed analytical paragraph of the poem 'Exposure'	Assessment for Learning	Sentence starters, suggested vocabulary	Develop a PEE paragraph on a poem of your choice, showing an in-depth understanding, insight and engagement with the poet's thematic focus, diction and style.