

**BAHAMAS GENERAL CERTIFICATE  
OF  
SECONDARY EDUCATION**

**LITERATURE  
SYLLABUS**

**FIRST SITTING 2007**

**Text List Revised 2009**

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**BAHAMAS GENERAL CERTIFICATE  
OF  
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**LITERATURE**

**INTRODUCTION**

The Literature programme in our secondary schools should aim to develop pupils' powers of feeling and thought, and stimulate them to continue reading for personal growth and development. The study of literature should complement the English Language programme as it is the basis of much of the content of language study and represents the product of the skills which our pupils are trying to perfect.

The Literature experience should heighten the students' sensitivity to the beauty of language, expose them to diverse cultures, create in them a sense of wonder, and help them to develop a sense of themselves by exploring the lives and experiences of others. The Literature programme should promote interaction among students, teachers and texts. The course of study for the BGCSE Literature Examination must consist of the detailed study of individual texts as well as wider reading in the three main genres - prose, poetry and drama.

The approaches used in teaching Literature should stress the development of skills and insights needed to derive satisfaction from prose, poetry and drama rather than focus on facts alone. Students writing the examination should be performing at or above the seventh grade reading level.

## **AIMS**

**The BGCSE Literature syllabus aims to give candidates the opportunity to:-**

- 1. respond with feeling and empathy to what is read and heard;**
- 2. develop a critical appreciation of the writer's craft through close textual study and wider reading;**
- 3. relate literature to life in order to foster a deeper understanding of human nature;**
- 4. understand and respond critically to what is seen and heard;**
- 5. explore literature as a means of emotional and intellectual growth and development;**
- 6. cultivate an appreciation of works by Bahamian writers and those of other cultures;**
- 7. enjoy and appreciate the reading of literature.**

## **OBJECTIVES**

**Candidates should be able to:**

- 1. acquire first-hand knowledge of the content of literary texts;**
- 2. demonstrate an appreciation and understanding of literary texts in ways which may range from a grasp of surface meaning to a deeper awareness of themes and attitudes;**
- 3. communicate a sensitive and informed personal response to what is read, ensuring that the response is firmly rooted in the text;**
- 4. recognize and appreciate ways in which writers use language;**
- 5. recognize and appreciate ways in which writers structure their work (e.g. plot, characterization, setting);**
- 6. show evidence of wider reading.**

## SYLLABUS

The relationship between the Assessment Objectives and the components of the Scheme of Assessment and the weighing 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.

Objective	Overall Weighting %	Written Examination %	Coursework %
1	19	16	3
2	19	16	3
3	19	16	3
4	19	16	3
5	19	16	3
6	5	-	5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>20</b>

## SCHEME OF ASSESSMENT

Candidates will enter for Papers 1 and 2 plus Teacher-assessed Coursework (Paper 3).

1. Teacher-assessed Coursework.....20% (At least 2 genres must be used)
2. Paper 1 - Written Examination .....40% Literary Appreciation & Prose
3. Paper 2 - Written Examination.....40% Drama & Poetry

## **DIFFERENTIATION**

The written work of candidates on the texts chosen for study will provide evidence of differentiation in response and achievement as described in the objectives.

In the Coursework folders differentiation will be achieved by teachers presenting candidates with tasks appropriate to their levels of ability and by the candidates' responses.

## **CONTENT**

The syllabus focuses on the development of the skills and insights the students would need to obtain enjoyment and satisfaction from prose, drama and poetry. It places more emphasis on exposing pupils to literature than on the learning of facts about literary works and literary history. Additional to the pleasure Literature affords, the students' ability to read and write about it will be enriched by knowledge of the following:

- **Author / Poet**
- **Title**
- **The Literal Meaning**
- **Themes**
- **Setting/Situation/Time Period/Chronology**
- **Point of View : first person, third person, omniscient**
- **Characterization: flat, rounded, static, dynamic; writer's techniques, character traits, actions, words**
- **Plot: exposition, rising action, climax, resolution : suspense, foreshadowing, flashback**
- **Tone/ Mood/ Atmosphere**
- **Language / Literary Devices**
  - ▶ **Imagery**
  - ▶ **Figures of Speech**
  - ▶ **Symbolism**
  - ▶ **Rhythm/Rhyme**
  - ▶ **Diction/ Word Choice: denotation, connotation, concrete, abstract, etc.**
  - ▶ **Voice**
  - ▶ **Form**
  - ▶ **Allusion**
  - ▶ **Irony**
  - ▶ **Sarcasm**
  - ▶ **Sound Devices : alliteration, assonance, onomatopoeia**

## **DRAMA**

Work done in this area should arise from in-depth studies based on the following aspects: action, plot, characterization, situation, language, theme.

Candidates should be given the opportunity to analyze, explain and offer opinions on various aspects of the texts. A critical comparison of a text with any adaptation made for film, television, radio or stage would also be appropriate.

Candidates could also be asked to produce imaginative reconstructions of parts of texts (e.g. imaginary newspaper accounts, inquest). The responses must be firmly rooted in the texts.

## **PROSE**

For this section candidates should be able to relate their study of particular texts to the demands of the general questions. Although candidates are only required to answer questions from two texts in this section of the examination, they should not be confined to a study of just two texts in their preparation.

**N.B.** Four - six (4 - 6) short stories, depending on length, may be regarded as a full - length text.

The following approaches may be used in grouping selected texts to be studied.

- a) **Study of a Theme or Topic (e.g. Growing Up, Old Age, Women in Literature)**  
Candidates could comment on situations found in the texts and contribute insight gained from their own relevant experiences.
- b) **Study of a Place or Region**  
Candidates might examine the contribution the setting makes to a narrative or compare other communities to their own. Not all the texts need to be set in the same area; a comparison of different contexts might be of interest. Works studied might include a selection which contains dialect.
- c) **Study of a Period**  
Candidates might comment on the attitude of writers towards the period in which they wrote and what is learned about the writers' experiences.
- d) **Study of an Author**  
This might include information about his life and an analysis of interesting aspects of his work.

It is important that candidates provide sufficient evidence to support their comments and opinions and that they show an understanding of the text being studied.

## **POETRY**

Candidates should have had the opportunity to study and respond to a wide variety of poems from the syllabus in preparation for this section. Selections of unprepared poetry should also be included.

Candidates will be expected to show an understanding and appreciation of themes and the poets' use of language.

A reasonable number of poems for study would be between 15 and 20. This does not preclude the reading of a far greater number. A shorter number of poems may be studied if poems are of a longer nature.

The poems may be from any period. Although no length or level of complexity is specified, it is expected that the poems used for appreciation will be:-

- a) of sufficient substance to enable candidates to write fully about them;
- b) appropriate to the interests and abilities of the age group for the examination.

It is expected that the chosen poems be grouped for response and criticism. The following are examples of how poems could be grouped:

- a) four or five poems linked by theme (or type,) e.g. love, protest, sleep/death, childhood, nature;
- b) a selection of poems by a single writer;
- c) five or six poems which demonstrate particular stylistic features, (ballads/narrative poems, and sonnets);
- d) five or six poems of a particular region or culture;
- e) four or five contrasting poems for comparison and appreciation.

These suggested groupings tend to overlap, but they are examples only. It is expected that candidates' responses will demonstrate an appreciation of subject matter and its treatment, and any personal insights, speculations or experiences which make the poems interesting. Candidates should also show some understanding of the use of poetic features such as figures of speech and imagery. This understanding would naturally flow from a study of poetry. It should be emphasized, therefore, that merely learning a list of poetic devices is non-productive and examination questions will not assume such knowledge.

## PRESCRIBED TEXTS – 2007

The prescribed list of twenty texts is included to aid schools in their selection of suitable texts for developing students' ability to enjoy good literature. A minimum of seven texts (five for the examination and two for Coursework) should be selected for detailed study over the three-year period. At least one of the texts studied for the examination (Paper 1 or Paper 2) must be Bahamian.

Please note that examination and Coursework texts are listed separately. The prescribed list may be amended by the examiners after a three-year period.

### EXAMINATION TEXTS

TITLE	AUTHOR/EDITOR	PUBLISHER
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#### POETRY TEXTS

Following is a list from which poems are to be selected for detailed study. Candidates must base responses to examination questions (Paper 2, Poetry Section) on poems taken from this list only.

TITLE	AUTHOR/EDITOR	PUBLISHER
<i>Touched with Fire</i>	Jack Hydes	Cambridge University Press

- |     |                      |                                      |
|-----|----------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1.  | Ted Hughes           | Thistle                              |
| 2.  | Wole Soyinka         | Telephone Conversation               |
| 3.  | William Shakespeare  | Sonnet 116                           |
| 4.  | Robert Browning      | My Last Duchess                      |
| 5.  | Wilfred Owen         | Anthem for Doomed Youth              |
| 6.  | Wilfred Owen         | Dulce Et Decorum Est                 |
| 7.  | William Blake        | A Poison Tree                        |
| 8.  | Edwin Brock          | Five Ways to Kill a Man              |
| 9.  | Seamus Heaney        | Mid-Term Break                       |
| 10. | Matthew Arnold       | Dover Beach                          |
| 11. | Chinua Achebe        | Refugee Mother and Child             |
| 12. | John Keats           | Ode to Autumn                        |
| 13. | Robert Frost         | Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening |
| 14. | Alfred Lord Tennyson | The lotos-Eaters                     |
| 15. | John Keats           | Ode to a Nightingale                 |
| 16. | Coventry Patmore     | The Toys                             |
| 17. | Mervin Morris        | Little Boy Crying                    |



<b>TITLE</b>	<b>AUTHOR/EDITOR</b>	<b>PUBLISHER</b>
<i>West Indian Poetry</i>	<b>Ramchand &amp; Gray</b>	<b>Longman Caribbean</b>

- |     |                        |   |
|-----|------------------------|---|
| 1.  | Raymond Barrow         | Oh I Must Hurry                               |
| 2.  | Ian McDonald           | Yusman Ali, Charcoal Seller                   |
| 3.  | Owen Campbell          | Washerwomen                                   |
| 4.  | A.L. Hendricks         | Albert  |
| 5.  | Dennis Scott           | Bird  |
| 6.  | Dennis Craig           | Flowers                                       |
| 7.  | Mervyn Morris          | The Pond                                      |
| 8.  | H. A. Vaughan          | In Absence                                    |
| 9.  | A. L. Hendricks        | Will the Real Me Please Stand Up?             |
| 10. | Heather Royes          | Theophilus Jones Walks Naked Down King Street |
| 11. | Martin Carter          | This Is the Dark Time, My Love                |
| 12. | Ian McDonald           | Jaffo the Calypsonian                         |
| 13. | Wordsworth A. McAndrew | Ol' Higue                                     |
| 14. | Claude McKay           | I Shall Return                                |
| 15. | Dionne Brand           | Since You                                     |

<b>TITLE</b>	<b>AUTHOR/EDITOR</b>	<b>PUBLISHER</b>
<i>Bahamian Anthology</i>	<b>The College of The Bahamas</b>	<b>Macmillan Caribbean</b>

- |     |                        |                                 |
|-----|------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1.  | Patrick Rahming        | Mailboat to Hell                |
| 2.  | Cheryl Albury          | Welfare Baby                    |
| 3.  | Cheryl Albury          | Super Wife                      |
| 4.  | Cheryl Albury          | Poem for Mothers                |
| 5.  | J. L. Mayson           | Barefoot Boy                    |
| 6.  | Marcella Taylor        | Taste of Apocalypse             |
| 7.  | Telcine Turner-Rolle   | Ode                             |
| 8.  | Robert Johnson         | Sun in My Skin                  |
| 9.  | Dennis Knowles         | Political Farce                 |
| 10. | Marcella Taylor        | Barnum's Animal Crackers        |
| 11. | K. Andre Turnquist     | Crystal Clear Confusion         |
| 12. | Basil Smith            | My Heritage                     |
| 13. | Robert Johnson         | East Street                     |
| 14. | Norris Carroll         | When THE MAN Besieges Your Land |
| 15. | Meta Davis Cumberbatch | Of 'The Barren'                 |

**PROSE TEXTS****TITLE****AUTHOR/EDITOR****PUBLISHER***The Fledgling*

Chester Thompson

White Sound Press

*Beka Lamb*

Zee Edgell

Heinemann

*Perspectives from Inner Windows*

Cheryl Albury

Faber and Faber

*Lord of the Flies*

William Golding

**DRAMA TEXTS****TITLE****AUTHOR/EDITOR****PUBLISHER***The Marriage of Anansewa*

Efua T. Sutherland

Longman

*Macbeth*

William Shakespeare

Cambridge University Press

*Woman Take Two*

Telcine Turner

Macmillan Caribbean

*A Raisin in the Sun*

Lorraine Hansberry

Vintage Books

**COURSEWORK****TITLE****AUTHOR/EDITOR****PUBLISHER****POETRY TEXTS***A Choice of Poets**Thoughts in Black and White**Still Standing*

R. Hewett

Pat Rahming

Michael Pintard

Nelson Harrap

Pat Rahming

Guanima Press Ltd.

**PROSE***An Evening in Guanima**Things Fall Apart**Miguel Street*

Patricia Ginton

Chinua Achebe

V.S. Naipaul

Guanima Press

Heinemann

Heinemann

**DRAMA***Pygmalion**Three Caribbean Plays**The Merchant of Venice*

G.B. Shaw

Errol Hill (Ed)

William Shakespeare

Penguin

Longman Caribbean

Cambridge University Press

## **FORMAT**

### **TEACHER-ASSESSED COURSE WORK**

This paper will carry 20% of the total marks. All candidates will be required to show evidence of detailed study of two texts covering two genres. This will be achieved by the production of a Coursework folder.

The folder must contain two (2) pieces of work, one (1) of which must be written under classroom supervision and the other as an independent study. Each piece of work should be not less than 400 words in length. Each piece should be marked according to the grading criteria outlined in the Coursework Manual, and awarded a mark out of 20. All Coursework pieces must be completed by the end of February of the Examination year.

During the month of March, the Coursework folders will be graded holistically as ONE assignment, again following the grading criteria as outlined in the Manual, and awarded a mark out of 20. Coursework folders are to be marked by the candidates' teachers, then internally moderated by an internal moderator identified by the centre. Selected folders from each centre will be submitted to the Testing and Evaluation Section to be externally moderated.

Teachers will need to ensure that texts selected meet the requirements of the syllabus and that tasks set allow candidates to address all of the assessment objectives. In accordance with the assessment objectives, the folder will be expected to provide evidence of:

- (i) knowledge of content;
- (ii) awareness of:
  - themes and attitudes,
  - use of language,
  - structure,
  - characterization;
- (iii) personal response.

Little credit should be given to plot summaries, biographies of authors or generalized comments unrelated to a specific question, and no credit will be given to copies of dictated work.

Coursework requirements and procedures are briefly outlined on the following page. Centres are advised to refer to the Coursework Manual for more detailed information on the preparation and submission of Coursework.

## **COURSEWORK REQUIREMENTS**

**FOLDER CONTAINING TWO HANDWRITTEN PIECES:**

**TWO TEXTS**

**TWO GENRES (POETRY, PROSE OR DRAMA)**

**TWO CATEGORIES:**

- **CLASSROOM SUPERVISED ASSIGNMENT**
- **INDEPENDENT STUDY**

**EACH ASSIGNMENT NOT LESS THAN 400 WORDS**

**EACH ASSIGNMENT MARKED BY CANDIDATE'S TEACHER BEFORE BEING PLACED IN FOLDER**

**FOLDER MUST COVER ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES:**

**(i) KNOWLEDGE OF CONTENT**

**(ii) AWARENESS OF:  
THEMES AND ATTITUDES  
WRITER'S USE OF LANGUAGE  
STRUCTURE OF TEXT  
CHARACTERIZATION**

**(iii) PERSONAL RESPONSE**

**FOLDER MARKED BY CANDIDATE'S TEACHER**

**FOLDERS INTERNALLY MODERATED BY SCHOOL/CENTRE**

**FOLDERS MUST BE SUBMITTED TO THE TESTING AND EVALUATION SECTION BY MID-APRIL OF THE EXAMINATION YEAR.**

**WRITTEN EXAMINATION****Paper I - Literary Appreciation and Prose - Time: 2 hours**

This paper will carry 40% of the total marks and will consist of two (2) sections. Candidates will be expected to answer all questions from Section I and two from Section II.

**Section I - Literary Appreciation**

Candidates will be required to respond to an open-ended question based on an unseen literary selection.

**Section II - Prose**

Candidates will be required to write two essays, each on a different text.

There will be one extract-based and two essay questions on each set text.

**Paper 2: Drama - Poetry - (Time 2 hours)**

This paper will carry 40% of the total marks. It will consist of two sections: (I) Drama; (II) Poetry. Candidates will be expected to answer three (3) questions, at least one from each section and each on a different text.

**Section I - Drama**

There will be one extract-based and two essay questions on each set drama text.

**Section II - Poetry**

There will be three questions on poetry.

## **GRADE DESCRIPTIONS**

Grade descriptions are provided to give a general indication of the standard of achievement likely to have been shown by candidates awarded particular grades.

**Grade G** The candidate has demonstrated:

- an understanding of basic events in a text;
- a recognition of the broad features of characters involved;
- a personal view or response to the texts studied.

**Grade F** The candidate has been able to:

- give a straightforward account of the content of literary texts in terms of narrative and situation;
- understand the surface meaning of literary texts;
- recognize obvious aspects of the texts studied, such as characterization;
- communicate a straightforward personal response to the texts studied.

**Grade E** The candidate has been able to:

- give a broad account of the content of literary texts with reference to narrative and situation; - understanding the surface meaning of texts with some awareness of themes and attitudes;
- recognize some of the basic features of the ways authors write;
- recognize important aspects of texts such as characterization;
- communicate a basic personal response to the texts studied.

**Grade D The candidate has demonstrated competence in:**

- giving an account of the content of literary texts with some reference to narrative and situation; - understanding literary texts in a way that shows a recognition of themes and attitudes;
- recognizing some of the significant ways in which writers have used language in the texts studied.
- recognizing some other aspects of texts used by authors to present ideas;
- communicating a personal response which shows that some significant points have been considered.

**Grade C The candidate has demonstrated competence in:**

- giving an account of the content of literary texts, with detailed reference, where appropriate, to narrative and situation;
- Understanding literary texts at a deeper level and showing some awareness of their themes, implications and attitudes;
- recognizing and appreciating specific ways in which writers have used language in the texts studied;
- recognizing and appreciating the significance of other ways (e.g. structure, characterization) in which the writers studied have achieved their effects;
- communicating an informed personal response to the texts studied.



**Grade B** The candidate has demonstrated a high level of competence in:

- giving an account of the content of literary texts, with appropriate reference to narrative and situation, supported by quotation;
- understanding literary texts at a range of levels showing some emphasis on interpretation and evaluation with a recognition of themes and attitudes;
- recognizing and appreciating other significant ways (e.g. structure, characterization, imagery) in which the writers studied have achieved their effects;
- communicating a well considered personal response to the texts studied.

**Grade A** the candidate has demonstrated expertise in:

- giving an account in appropriate detail of the content of the literary texts, with well chosen reference to narrative and situation, properly supported by quotation;
- understanding literary texts at a range of levels with due emphasis on interpretation and evaluation and a thoughtful recognition of both themes and attitudes;
- recognizing, appreciating and evaluating the ways in which writers have used language in the texts studied;
- recognizing, appreciating and evaluating other significant ways (e.g. structure, characterization, imagery) in which the writers studied have achieved their effects;
- communicating a considered and reflective personal response to the texts studied.

