

# THE word

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AUTUMN 2011

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Welcome to the **Autumn 2011 Edition of The Word**. Since my last communication educational change has moved at a fast pace and with the introduction of **linear GCSE specifications** replacing the modular structures from September 2012, a greater emphasis on spelling, punctuation and grammar in government proposals and a rewriting of the National Curriculum there is much to be discussed and be aware of. I would encourage all those with a voice in the English world to make their feelings known in the series of consultations that are taking place either through NATE, the newly formed Partnerships in English group or individually to Ofqual on their website. There has already been a lively debate on our social networking site.

Included in this edition is information on the new **linear specifications** and a **curriculum planner** to support

you but we are concerned that these linear structures place even more pressure on GCSE Literature students and we are looking at ways to resolve this within the criteria. The new **Living Texts** qualification, now accredited and operating within several centres, may be an option for many.

At GCE there has been less indication of change although there are rumours of a move to linear specifications here too but as yet nothing has been formalised in this area. GCE Development is not far off we suspect, and for that reason we have been involved with a variety of stakeholders from schools, colleges and Higher Education looking at ways of broadening our English provision. Any thoughts or ideas in that direction would be welcomed here at OCR on **English@ocr.org.uk**.

Finally, we have begun the recruitment process to appoint a Curriculum Leader in English. The role of this newly appointed person will be to broaden and strengthen our links with the English community and teachers along with the recently appointed regional managers as we move forward. I see this as being a particularly exciting development at this time.

**Paul Dodd**  
Languages and Literature

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## Studying Non Fiction for English Literature A Level

We know that one of the features teachers like the most about our English Literature A Level is the total freedom in the coursework units to teach texts you love – and may not otherwise get the opportunity to study with your A Level students.

A non-fiction text could bring fresh perspectives and personal interest to the programmes of study you create for the coursework units. It could be a great partner in a 'Linked Texts' essay for unit F662, or an interesting counterpoint third text to the poetry and prose requirements for unit F664. If you provide your candidates with a choice of texts, a non-fiction text might appeal to some students and lead to a greater variety of texts and tasks being used in coursework folders.

For F662, the Post 1990 text requirement lends itself to recent popular texts – and non-fiction texts. One of the most popular combinations we see is the pairing of *The Bookseller of Kabul* by Asne Seierstad which works well with *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini, both having post 9/11 international concerns. But over the sessions we have seen in samples *The Diving Bell and the Butterfly* by Jean-Dominique Bauby; "*Rivers of Blood*" the speech by Enoch Powell (only eligible, of course, alongside other pronouncements by Powell or other political speeches); *The Peregrine* by J. A. Baker, *Kitchen Confidential* by Anthony Bourdain, *The Death of the Moth* and other essays by Virginia Woolf, and *An Image of Africa* with other writings by Chinua Achebe.

Principal Moderator for F662, Literature Post 1900, Martin Drury, said, "*We have seen very different texts and genres – memoir, gonzo journalism, political address, lecture, etc – which reveal the challenging way centres are re-interpreting what literature means and how to make connections between works. Ask yourself: what texts would you put alongside the non-fiction listed above and what fresh approaches would those combinations entail for you.*"

Meanwhile, Noel Cassidy, the Principal Moderator for F664, Texts in Time, said, "*At INSET for the text choices activity I put out Antony Sher's *The Year of the King*, which I could see working well in a group about politics and power - with Richard III and some as yet unidentified poetry, perhaps political satires by Pope or Wyatt. I'm hoping that one day one of my students might use *Tim Butcher's Blood River* in a postcolonial group, but it's not happened yet!*"

In the specification, the coursework unit regulations state that one text may be a work of literary criticism or cultural commentary. All these texts would be applicable as works of cultural commentary. The only caveat we'd have to give is that the non-fiction text needs to be engaged with as a literary text, and have equal weighting with the other texts in the essay.

Finally, don't forget that OCR's Coursework Consultancy is a free service to get your texts and tasks for the coursework units approved by a Senior Moderator. You can contact the Coursework Consultancy via OCR's website.



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# Q & A Living Texts

– answering your questions about the new Level 1 and 2 Certificate

Now that the Level 1 and 2 Certificate in Living Texts has been accredited and teaching is well underway in a number of schools, we thought we'd take the opportunity to publish some of the queries we've been receiving about the qualification.

We hope you will find these **Questions & Answers** helpful and that they give you more of an insight into Living Texts. If you have any more questions or think Living Texts is a course your school would like to follow, please don't hesitate to contact us at: [living.texts@ocr.org.uk](mailto:living.texts@ocr.org.uk)

**Joanne Hebblewhite**

Qualifications Manager – Living Texts

## Q: What is Living Texts?

**A:** Living Texts is a Level 1 and 2 Certificate in English that covers a wide range of literary and non-literary texts. Teachers and students can choose the texts they want to study.

The qualification has three units, each with just one assessment objective. The units cover analysing texts, recreating texts and comparing texts. All units are internally assessed and externally moderated.

Living Texts has been designed to enhance OCR's suite of English qualifications.

## Q: How does Living Texts compare to a GCSE?

**A:** Living Texts has two levels – Level 2 is the equivalent in standard to a higher GCSE, Level 1 is the equivalent in standard to a foundation GCSE.

The Certificate in Living Texts is a stand-alone qualification; it does not fulfil the English GCSE Key Stage 4 criteria. However, it has been designed so that it can be followed alongside GCSEs.

## Q: Who can take the qualification?

**A:** Living Texts has been designed as a flexible qualification that could be best utilised in a number of ways. For example, some schools are following the course in Year 9, others are running the course alongside a sole GCSE in English. Living Texts could also be used to stretch gifted and talented GCSE students.

Please see the progression pathways document in the specification for more details and suggestions on how to use Living Texts.

## Q: Can I teach the same texts as I am teaching for GCSE English or GCSE English Literature?

**A:** Yes – Living Texts has been designed to allow for greater flexibility so it is possible to co-teach alongside English GCSEs.

## Q: Which genres are available?

### Unit B931

*Students must cover at least two of the following genres:*

Novel or a collection of Short Stories  
Travel Writing or Biographical/Autobiographical Writing  
Drama or Film/TV/Radio script  
Poetry (collection)  
Spoken Language (collection)  
Media (collection)

### Unit B932

*Students must cover at least two of the following genres*

Novel or Short Story  
Travel Writing or Biographical/Autobiographical Writing  
Drama or Film/TV/Radio script  
Spoken Language (collection)  
Media (collection)

Please note the following points about Unit B932:

- At least one of the genres chosen must be different to that covered in Unit B931.
- Poetry is not available in this unit.

### Unit B933

Novel or a collection of Short Stories  
Travel Writing or Biographical/Autobiographical Writing  
Drama or Film/TV/Radio script  
Poetry (collection)  
Spoken Language (collection)  
Media (collection)

Please note the following points about Unit B933:

- Two texts, from any genre should be chosen.
- At least one text must be different to those studied in units B931 and B932.

## Q: How many texts should students study across the three units?

**A:** Students will study a minimum of five texts, but there is the possibility to study more.

## Q: What is an extended text?

**A:** Texts should be of a sufficient quality and substance to support detailed study and analysis at Level 1/ Level 2. Please see the list of suggested texts in the specification for guidance on the types of texts that are suitable. If you are still unsure please contact the consultancy for advice at [living.texts@ocr.org.uk](mailto:living.texts@ocr.org.uk)

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#### Q: In Unit B932 - Recreating Texts, how close to the original text should the student's work be?

**A:** To gain high marks in this unit, the mark scheme requires that students: "Write in a 'voice' or register which is entirely convincing and fully consistent with the stimulus text."

Please see the sample assessment material for suggested tasks that would lead students to do this, for example tasks such as:  
*Write a monologue giving the thoughts and feelings of [choose a character at a key point in a novel/short story].*

Or

*Talking Heads, Alan Bennett  
You are Miss Ruddock, some time after the end of 'Lady of Letters'. Continue your thoughts.*

#### Q: Do I have to complete the units in order?

**A:** No. However, the qualification has been set-up to follow a logical progression from analysing to recreating and then on to a personal study.

#### Q: Could my students complete Living Texts over two years?

**A:** Yes, Living Texts can be completed as a two year course. This qualification has the same guided learning hours as a GCSE, so it is possible to complete the units over one or two years. Exemplar curriculum plans will be available with the support material.

#### Q: Do you have more information about the controlled assessment element of the qualification?

**A:** Unit B932 will be taken under a low level of control. Please see the Guide to Controlled Assessment for further information.

#### Q: Is the presentation compulsory for Unit B933?

**A:** Yes. Students can only receive a maximum mark of 30 out of 40 if a written response only is completed.

#### Q: Where can I find support material?

**A:** Support material is available on the OCR website at: [www.ocr.org.uk/livingtexts](http://www.ocr.org.uk/livingtexts) This material is being updated regularly.

#### Q: Is there a consultancy for feedback and advice on text and task choices?

**A:** Yes. For all queries about suitability of texts and tasks please email: [living.texts@ocr.org.uk](mailto:living.texts@ocr.org.uk)

#### Q: Are there any training courses?

**A:** We are running free INSET days in November 2011. For further details, please see: [www.ocreventbooker.org.uk](http://www.ocreventbooker.org.uk)

#### Q: How is Living Texts graded?

**A:** Students for Living Texts do not need to be entered for a specific level. Students will be differentiated by outcome.

The qualification is graded in the same way as a GCSE. Students who are graded a\* to c will receive a Level 2 certificate, students who are graded d to g will receive a Level 1 certificate.

#### Q: Is there an age limit for this qualification - can it be used by Key Stage 3 students?

**A:** There is no age limit for the qualification. Please see the progression pathways chart within the specification for suggested ways to use the course.

#### Q: When can I start teaching the qualification?

**A:** September 2011

#### Q: When is first certification available?

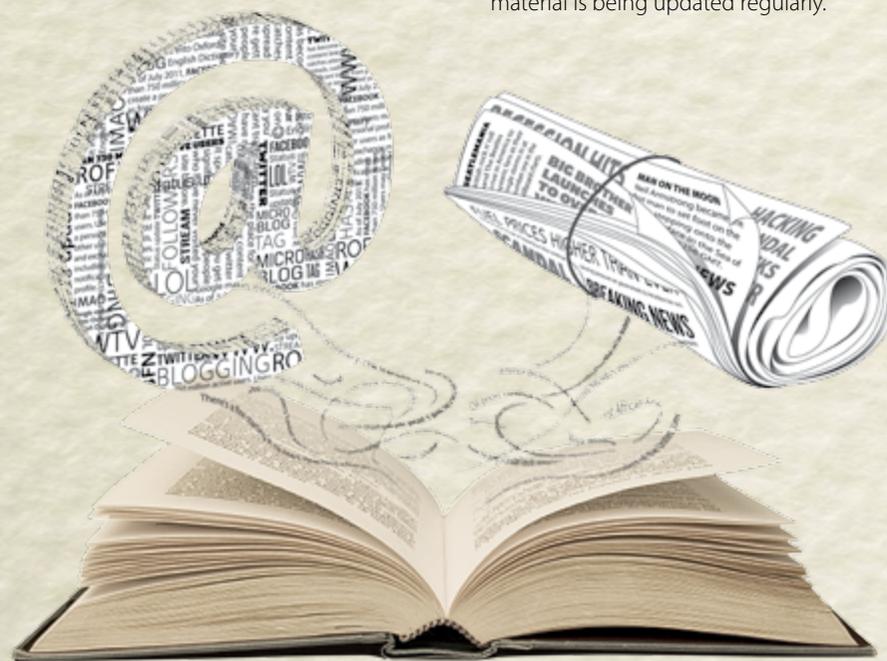
**A:** June 2012.

#### Q: In which sessions can students be entered for Living Texts?

**A:** Living Texts is only available in the June series.

#### Q: Is funding available?

**A:** Yes, Living Texts is funded.



We are running the following **FREE** half-day INSET courses for Living Texts:

**OCR New Level 1 and 2 Certificate in Living Texts (J945): Get ready - an innovative approach to English**

Course code OENS6

To book onto one of these courses please go to: [www.ocreventbooker.org.uk](http://www.ocreventbooker.org.uk)

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## Centre spotlight Isambard Community School



**Sarah Jones**  
Lead Teacher for  
English and Literacy  
Isambard Community School

**Opened in 2007, Isambard Community School is a relatively new school, based in Swindon, catering for the learning needs of local girls and boys aged 11 to 16. Around 240 students have joined the school each year since its inception and the school is now running at full capacity with around 1,200 students and 115 staff.**

English as a subject is taught from Year 7 up to GCSE in Years 9, 10 and 11 with the English department having opted to deliver OCR courses at all levels – Entry Level, GCSE and Functional Skills.

Leading with a team of seven teachers, Lead Teacher for English and Literacy at Isambard Community School, Sarah Jones, explains why they chose to follow OCR English specifications: *“We took a decision very early on that we wanted to go with OCR because they offered us something different from other exam boards. I was keen on building a text-based curriculum and OCR’s courses and exams neatly fitted in with that thinking.”*

In Years 7 and 8, students study a variety of fiction and non-fiction texts. Literature, from a variety of cultures, is at the heart of the department’s teaching, but students also examine a range of media texts at both Key Stages.

Students also develop core literacy skills of Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening so that they can analyse texts, express themselves clearly and communicate with others effectively.

To monitor progress and establish personal targets, students are required to undertake assessments throughout the year. These are completed either in test conditions or as extended home-learning tasks.

English remains a compulsory subject throughout Key Stage 4, but several choices are open to students leading them towards different qualifications, depending on their own interests and capabilities.

*“Whilst OCR’s English courses are quite traditional, and actually quite challenging for our students, they give us a lot of variety and flexibility too,”* explains Sarah. *“This means that we can offer alternative pathways for different individuals.”*

She adds: *“Students can change a lot during their time with us so it’s important for us to recognise this and support them with their learning. We have some very talented students achieving top grades, but equally we need to stretch and support less able students - OCR’s qualifications enable us to cater for all.”*

OCR’s GCSE English qualifications are provided in linear or modular format, and through a variety of assessment routes. This more flexible approach complements the school’s overall philosophy of personalised learning.

At Key Stage 4, the majority of students go on to study one or more of three OCR GCSE qualifications: English, English Language and English Literature.

The OCR GCSE English courses maintain the same assessment objectives to Key Stage 3: Speaking and Listening, Reading and Writing.

At Key Stage 4 the majority of students at the school can expect to study:

- Media and information texts such as newspapers, magazines and online articles
- Non-fiction texts such as diaries, letters, biographies and autobiographies
- Texts from other cultures
- Pre and post twentieth century drama (including at least one play by William Shakespeare)
- Pre and post twentieth century poetry
- Pre and post twentieth century prose

This variety enables students to explore the subject of English from several modern, as well as traditional, perspectives.

*“In English Language, our students are empowered to bring in their own social and cultural knowledge which gives them the freedom to be creative with their thinking, speaking and writing,”* says Sarah.

She adds that in today’s modern world of Instant Messaging, Mobile Text Messaging and Social Media, teaching tone and vocabulary to young people has become even more important than perhaps it was in the past.

*“We encourage students to learn and use words that are outside of their normal comfort zone,”* says Sarah. *“The students really enjoy this, particularly the higher achieving boys who have become competitive with each other!”*

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Poetry is also popular among students. *“Although it’s quite challenging for them, most of the students really enjoy studying this part of the course,”* explains Sarah. *“They like exploring the mathematical construction of poetry and we also have cross-curricular topics such as Wilfred Owen (poet and soldier) across English and History.*

*“Our current study of Christina Rossetti has involved many interesting discussions about ‘Victorian values.’ The historical context leads perfectly into the study of An Inspector Calls.*

*This year, 77% of students in Year 10 achieved an English Language A\* to C GCSE qualification, with the majority going on to study GCSE Literature in Year 11.*

*“Two of the points I particularly like about OCR’s Literature qualification are the great choice of texts on offer and the fact that students are motivated by the challenge – there is no ‘dumbing down’ going on,”* says Sarah.

Students working towards their GCSE C grade will focus their time on GCSE English. *“The additional English GCSE means that our slightly less able students are still able to study for a qualification that involves a wide range of text choices, while still concentrating on basic literacy skills,”* explains Sarah.

Sarah remarks that one of the benefits of working with OCR is that its English courses and qualifications are clearly mapped out for both teachers and students alike.

*“One of the dangers of APP (Assessing Pupils’ Progress) is that English teaching can become very fragmented,”* says Sarah. *“It’s important for teachers, parents and students to know what to expect from the English courses being delivered. I’m really pleased with OCR’s help in this area. They have helped us to develop courses that are not only easy to follow and understand but also creative and challenging.”*

To find out more about OCR’s English qualifications, visit: [www.ocr.org.uk](http://www.ocr.org.uk)

To find out more about Isambard Community School, visit: [www.isambard.swindon.sch.uk](http://www.isambard.swindon.sch.uk)

Heather Tucker is another of Isambard Community School’s English teachers; in 2010 she became a professionally qualified teacher and joined Sarah and the English department.

*“As a new teacher, I’ve been delighted with the support that OCR has not just given to the school, but to me personally as well,”* says Heather. *“I hadn’t had much hands-on experience moderating and OCR have been fantastically helpful in this area.*

*“They ran an excellent training day for us and have since helped us to develop the coursework with example materials. Paul Dodd (Qualifications Group Manager for Languages and Literature at OCR) has been especially helpful to me and the other English teachers.*

*“The OCR courses are very well structured and organised. Our students feel secure with the course layout and it’s great that they have the opportunity to get involved early on, such as developing their listening and speaking skills in Year 9. It helps to build their confidence and you can see how much they’ve developed their skills when they eventually transfer into Years 10 and 11.”*



## OCR’s GCSE English specifications have several important benefits for schools:

- Commonality of teaching of GCSE English and GCSE English Language with a common exam between the two.
- Generic tasks offered in Extended Literary Texts and Reading Literary Texts enabling schools and colleges to choose their own texts.
- The accessibility of Foundation questions in the one exam unit in English and English Language.
- The link between the Spoken Language study and Speaking & Listening activities for the former.
- Easy progression from KS3 to KS4.

**Heather Tucker**  
English Teacher  
Isambard Community School

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## Two year GCSE planner – English – Model 1 – Linear Structure

		Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Jan Module	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	June Module	Summer 2
Year 10	Exam work	Work on Information and Ideas Paper - A680							
	Controlled Assessment	Speaking and Listening Task One - A643	Work on Imaginative Writing Skills - A642		Read Prose or Literary Non Fiction Text for study - A641	Speaking and Listening Task Two - A643	Read Shakespeare Text for study - A641		Complete Shakespeare Controlled Assessment task - A641 (or allow further research over holiday period and complete task on return in Year 11)
		Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Jan Module	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	June Module	Summer 2
Year 11	Exam work		Work on Information and Ideas Paper - A680				Work on Information and Ideas Paper - A680	Enter A680	
	Controlled Assessment	Work on Imaginative Writing Controlled Assessment tasks - A642  Sit Controlled Assessment Units - A642			Speaking and Listening Task Three - A643  Revisit Prose or Literary Non Fiction Text - A641 and sit Controlled Assessment Task	Work on Poetry - A641  Sit Poetry Controlled Assessment task - A641	Final Speaking and Listening Session - A643  Tidy up Controlled Assessment work	Enter All CA work	

This model is for English. If the candidate transfers to the dual combination two of the texts could have been studied already.

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## Finding a path through a media text...

A senior examiner for unit A680 Higher paper demonstrates how to analyse a media text, which is a key part of the GCSE English/English Language exam. The text being analysed can be found here: [www.ocr.org.uk/english/article](http://www.ocr.org.uk/english/article).

Analysing a media text is a crucial aspect of the Information and Ideas paper. Candidates are expected to analyse texts on questions 2 and 3 of the higher paper, and questions 2a and 2b on the foundation paper.

Candidates may be asked to comment on the presentation of the text – this will include the structure of the text as well as the use of layout and images. Here, as a starting point, candidates might observe that the lost city of Little Petra is not immediately obvious in the picture shown. The picture heading cleverly subverts the expression, 'between a rock and a hard place' to suggest that here the specific difficulty of the writer is that this 'rock' is 'hard' to find. The headline announces a feeling of bewilderment and links it, through alliteration, with the foreign, exotic quality of the "Bedouin back-road". This prepares us for the central idea, firmly stated in the first short sentence, "We were lost." The writer presents this as something shameful that has to be "conceded" and it leaves her feeling "baffled and disoriented". Candidates might explore the writer's very careful word choice and the mood created around the account of this trip. The language of battle is used - they were the "would-be-invaders" with a "gung-ho attitude" and this is a "defeat". Frequent, well-integrated supporting reference should feature at every stage of the analysis.

Candidates should consider the content of the article. Selected points of information about the location and origins of Little Petra are given and candidates might explore how this information shapes our feelings towards the place. Use of language again supports the presentation of viewpoint. Alliteration enhances the sense of an alien landscape as the writer feels "trapped" by "wave after wave of weird and weathered rock" while failing to discover a site "cleverly concealed"

behind "colossal" cliffs. Candidates should show understanding of the writer's point of view here, as we are encouraged to respect the "wily" creators of this secret city as hugely able people, successful traders whose "ingenuity", even across a gap of two thousand years, is held directly responsible for the writer's "plight".

In addition to description of place, two figures are introduced, Ahmed and the tea-seller, and candidates should question the purpose these characters serve. Defined largely by the amusement they show – their faces "grinning", "laughing" and "twitching into an 'I-told-you-so' smile", their confidence contrasts with and emphasises the writer's confusion. The tea-seller also acts as a structural device as the text concludes with the writer "safely drinking tea" back where she started – appropriate after a day "walking in circles" and underlining the frustration the writer wishes to convey. Candidates might wish to comment on how the writer's attitude has changed. Dialogue with the tea seller, previously alluded to as advice "shrugged off", is here given as direct speech for impact and immediacy, "You need a guide?" and the writer agrees, "Yes...I think we do". Shrewd candidates will almost certainly note that the repeated emphasis on the need for a guide is central to the purpose of the article, which is to announce the release of a new guidebook to Jordan.

**Media text analysis is very much about exploring how the individual aspects support the whole. Candidates should be trying to give an overview of the text that connects understanding of the writer's core ideas with appreciation of some of the writing techniques used to convey those ideas effectively.**

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*Exciting... stimulating... accessible... relevant... attractive...*

These are just a few of the words which have been used by teachers to describe the resources they have bought from the Oxford's GCSE English for OCR range, developed in collaboration with OCR and Teachit.

This comprehensive series covers every aspect of the OCR GCSE English specifications ensuring that whatever the ability of your students, you have everything you need to hand.

#### Support for teachers

- Teacher Guides give you extra support by providing ideas for starters and plenaries, including 'tweakit' ideas to help you differentiate activities for different students
- OxBBox CD-ROMs allow you to personalize your lessons, providing a library of customizable resources, and the ability to upload your own.

#### Support for students

- Student Books, covering Higher and Foundation Levels, include practice questions and sample Controlled Assessment responses to help students develop their own writing. Meanwhile 'Try this!' sections offer fun and creative exercises true to the Teachit tradition
- Access Books offer support to lower-ability Foundation or Entry Level students
- Skills and Practice books, packed with advice from examiners, help raise students' confidence as they approach Controlled Assessments and the examined units

All of the titles in this series are available individually on inspection, free for 30 days. Contact [fiona.lloydwilliams@oup.com](mailto:fiona.lloydwilliams@oup.com) to place an order, or to arrange a free OxBBox demonstration and see this flexible and customizable resource in action.

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# Student workshops

In April 2011 the English Team at OCR arranged for a Principal Examiner to spend the day conducting student workshops with a view to developing a Student Workshop Programme for the new GCSE English, English Language and English Literature specifications.

Charmaine Richards, Qualifications Manager for GCSE English and GCSE English Language, tells us all about it.



**Russell Carey**  
Principal Examiner

Principal Examiner, Russell Carey, was put through his paces at a secondary school just outside Manchester recently. His challenge was to deliver five student workshops in one day, topped off with a regional twilight meeting for local English teachers.

Russell seemed to be well in his stride as I entered the large hall where he was conducting his first workshop of the day. Twenty or so students were scattered around him in pairs, staring avidly at their handouts.

The PowerPoint projected onto the wall took students through the requirements of the new GCSE English Media and Non-Fiction exam. Worth 40% of the overall GCSE; the wisdom being imparted by Russell was not to be sniffed at and the students knew it.

At the end of the one hour session, I asked a few of the students what they had learned – “*Not to waffle!*” one pair of girls chimed in unison; “*What you’re meant to do for different questions,*” said a rather sensible-looking lad. It was impressive how seriously the students were taking it and certainly went towards convincing me that student workshops are a worthwhile aspect of support which OCR could develop further.

The school’s decision to split workshops between Higher and Foundation tiers also worked well, with most students being receptive to the sessions. The teachers present were also highly appreciative of them and the resources Russell had brought along.

Nevertheless, the difficulties for a trainer going into a school ‘cold’ to work with students in these circumstances cannot be ignored: access to photocopying facilities and refreshments being two of the most significant. One of the most crucial aspects would be that fundamentally, classroom management would need to remain the responsibility of the teacher organising the session if it is to be successful.

Luckily for Russell this was not an issue in Manchester, and he is looking forward to conducting future student workshops on behalf of OCR, though perhaps not five in one day again!

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## GCSE English Regional Group Meetings

Continuing on from the regional group meetings last year, we have arranged 20 regional group meetings for our GCSE centres in places as far apart as Newquay, Bury, Belfast and Chelmsford for November and December. Information on dates and how to book can be found on the website or our social networking site and bookings can be made by using our Eventbaker system on the Training pages of our website. By the time you receive this newsletter they will be well underway and for teachers they have proven popular. Twilight sessions in local venues give teachers an opportunity to network and meet fellow OCR centres in their vicinity.

The programme is teacher driven and concentrates on units that teachers identify as being central at that time and it gives us an opportunity to set the standards in controlled assessment work. The sessions are hosted by schools and we would like to thank those schools who agree to host, it is always interesting to visit such a wide range of schools. Our trainers are either senior assessors at OCR or members of the OCR English team.

We hope you enjoy this year's meetings and we are always open to suggestions for further training and professional development activities.

**Book your place today at**  
[www.ocreventbooker.co.uk](http://www.ocreventbooker.co.uk)  
using course code **OENQ3**

## AS Level English Literature F661 Poetry and Prose 1800 – 1945 Set Text changes

**Please do not forget that January 2012 is the last examination session on F661 on the original list of set texts.**

In June 2012, the F661 examination will be on the **NEW** set texts: Browning, Dickinson, Edward Thomas and W.B. Yeats for the Poetry; *Frankenstein*, *Jane Eyre*, *The Turn of the Screw*, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, *The Secret Agent*, and *Mrs Dalloway* for the Prose.

There will be no overlap of set texts. This means that June 2012 is the first examination opportunity for candidates studying the new texts.

OCR has produced a comprehensive range of support materials, including schemes of work, lesson plans and introductions with guided reading, for the new F661 set texts. You can find them in the 'Support' section of the A Level English Literature webpage on OCR's website.

[www.ocr.org.uk/english](http://www.ocr.org.uk/english)

# NEWS IN BRIEF

## The *English* Forum

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Literature A Level

Q&A Living Texts

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The new English Forum has met twice with a third meeting due in November 2011. The remit of the forum is to discuss a range of issues relevant to the English community as we move forward over the next decade. The membership list contains teachers from a range of schools and colleges, representatives from all the main English associations, members of English faculties in Higher Education, from publishers, theatre groups etc. It gives OCR an opportunity to listen to a range of views, secure feedback on proposals for development and gain a sense of what the current issues in the English community are as a whole. Overall, there is need for us to secure a strategic understanding of the requirements of qualifications that we design, to ensure we prepare young people for higher education and the world of work.

I for one have thoroughly enjoyed these discussions which I have found to be very stimulating and thought provoking. The English team at OCR involve themselves enthusiastically and I am certain that debates on many of the areas listed take place in English departmental meetings over the country!

If any of you are interested in being part of this forum please let me know on [paul.dodd@ocr.org.uk](mailto:paul.dodd@ocr.org.uk). Meetings take place in Cambridge three times a year and it is a fantastic opportunity to meet a range of people in the English community.

**Paul Dodd**  
Qualifications Group Manager

Areas of discussion have centred around such issues as those listed:

- *The National Literacy strategy*
- *The assessment driven curriculum*
- *The new National Curriculum in English*
- *Skills v knowledge in the teaching of English*
- *Gender issues in English*
- *Progression from GCSE to GCE to Higher Education*
- *HEI perspective on gaps and skills of students starting an English degree*
- *The place of grammar in the English curriculum*
- *The place of creative writing and creativity in future English qualifications*
- *The role of social media and digital communication in the teaching of English*
- *Employability skills and the place of functional English*

AS English Language  
and Literature

**F671 Speaking  
Voices**

Set Text Changes

A quick reminder that the current set texts for F671 will be changing for the **June 2012** exam series. January 2012 will be the last exam series for questions about the original list.

From June 2012 examinations will cover the following set texts only (there is no overlap with the original texts):

### Section A

Jeanette Winterson – *Oranges are Not the Only Fruit*

Kazuo Ishiguro – *The Remains of the Day*

Roddy Doyle – *Paddy Clarke Ha Ha Ha*

### Section B

Ian McEwan – *The Child in Time*

Evelyn Waugh – *A Handful of Dust*

Jane Austen – *Persuasion*

For further information, the specification can be found at:

**[www.ocr.org.uk/english](http://www.ocr.org.uk/english)**

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# NEWS IN BRIEF

## FREE eBooks for A Level Qualifications

We've joined up with Oxford University Press and Hodder Education to provide FREE AS and A2 textbooks online. Available now for ALL schools and colleges teaching A Levels.

With the recent cuts in the Education Maintenance Allowance, students will have no choice but to fund the purchasing of textbooks themselves. That's why at OCR, we're working in partnership with you and your students by offering free resources for AS and A2 qualifications, in the form of eBooks. This is the first initiative of its kind from any awarding body and it will provide a huge financial benefit to your centre, especially in times of reduced funding.

We work closely with Oxford University Press and Hodder Education to make sure

all our eBooks are endorsed and of the highest standards. And, these eBooks are available to all centres, regardless of whether you teach OCR qualifications or not.

They're really easy to order via OCR Interchange and when you order your free eBooks, you will automatically be entitled to 25%\* off the printed textbook alternative. This offer is only valid till 31st December 2011 so make sure you don't miss out.

\*25% discount offer applies to a minimum order quantity of 10 printed textbooks for each subject. Valid until 31st December 2011

**Order your FREE eBooks today  
at [www.ocr.org.uk/eBooks](http://www.ocr.org.uk/eBooks)**

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# UPCOMING EVENTS

## DECEMBER 2011

Our training courses and events are led by trainers who are experts in their field. Courses are carefully planned to provide valuable support for the delivery and assessment of our qualifications.

Our *Get ahead* courses are designed for experienced practitioners and teachers wanting to improve delivery and assessment of a current OCR specification.

### 2012 CPD events coming soon

Below is a list of exciting new events for our A Level English qualifications taking place next year.

**Course code: OENS7** - A Level English Conference

**Course code: OENS8** - Mary Shelley and *Frankenstein*

**Course code: OENS9** - Henry James and the *Turn of the Screw*

**Course code: OENT1** - Oscar Wilde and the *Picture of Dorian Gray*

**Course code: OENT2** - Shakespeare in context

Available to book using the course codes above from November 2011 at [www.ocreventbooker.org.uk](http://www.ocreventbooker.org.uk)

Check the latest event dates\* and book your place online at [www.ocreventbooker.org.uk](http://www.ocreventbooker.org.uk)

Our CPD courses will include a selection of keynote presentations, practical sessions, course materials and a unique opportunity to network and share ideas with others teaching the specifications.

Look out for more information arriving in your centres soon or visit our website [www.ocr.org.uk/training](http://www.ocr.org.uk/training). Alternatively you can email us to request additional information [training@ocr.org.uk](mailto:training@ocr.org.uk)

\*The full list of dates are not featured and other dates may be added.

DECEMBER

### 1 and 7

**OCR AS/A Level English Literature (H071/H471): Get ahead - improving delivery and achievement**

**Course code: OENS2**

*This full day course will:*

- Provide assessment feedback on the AS and A2 examined units
- Review exemplar scripts for the external examination of Units F661 and F663
- Discuss ideas and approaches for successful teaching
- Discuss approaches for dealing with synopticity and Stretch and Challenge
- Enable delegates to network and share ideas for best practice.

### 1 and 8

**OCR GCSE English Literature (J360): Get ahead - successful delivery of the internally/externally assessed units**

**Course code: OENR2**

*This full day course will:*

- Discuss ideas and approaches for successful teaching
- Provide an opportunity to ask questions of Senior Examiners on any aspect of the course
- Provide the opportunity to look at candidate evidence
- Enable delegates to network and share ideas for best practice.

### 2 and 7

**OCR GCSE English/English Language (J350/J355): Get ahead - successful delivery of the internally/externally assessed units**

**Course code: OENR3**

*This full day course will:*

- Discuss ideas and approaches for successful teaching
- Provide an opportunity to ask questions of Senior Examiners on any aspect of the course
- Provide the opportunity to look at candidate evidence
- Enable delegates to network and share ideas for best practice.

### 5 and 7

**OCR AS/A Level English Literature (H071/H471): Get ahead - improving delivery and assessment**

**Course code: OENS3**

*This full day course will:*

- Provide assessment feedback on the AS and A2 coursework units
- Review exemplar candidate work
- Consider ideas and approaches for teaching the coursework Units F662 and F664
- Review the support and resources we offer
- Enable delegates to network and share ideas for best practice.

# USEFUL WEB LINKS

## OCR

English Qualifications [www.ocr.org.uk/english](http://www.ocr.org.uk/english)

GCSE English and support [www.ocr.org.uk/english2010](http://www.ocr.org.uk/english2010)

New Living Texts qualification [www.ocr.org.uk/livingtexts](http://www.ocr.org.uk/livingtexts)

Controlled Assessment Tasks [www.ocr.org.uk/interchange](http://www.ocr.org.uk/interchange)

English Active Results [www.ocr.org.uk/activeresults](http://www.ocr.org.uk/activeresults)

Book Training [www.ocreventbooker.org.uk](http://www.ocreventbooker.org.uk)

Oxford University Press - Publisher partner resources

[www.oxfordsecondary.co.uk/english](http://www.oxfordsecondary.co.uk/english)

## OCR Customer Contact Centre

### General qualifications

Telephone 01223 553998

Facsimile 01223 552627

Email [general.qualifications@ocr.org.uk](mailto:general.qualifications@ocr.org.uk)



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