



Consultation on Junior Cycle English

Draft Report

September 2013

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Junior Cycle English: Development and consultation

The publication of *A Framework for Junior Cycle* in 2012 provided the context for the development of the curriculum specification for Junior Cycle English and establishes the parameters within which the work would progress. Subject specifications are to:

- be outcomes based
- reflect a continuum of learning with a focus on learner progression
- set out clear expectations for learners
- provide examples of those expectations
- include a focus on literacy and numeracy and on other key skills
- be clear, consistent and as accessible as possible.

Consultation on the background paper and brief

Consultation on the development of a specification for Junior Cycle English began with the publication of the background paper¹ in October 2012, which situated the work in the context of the junior cycle developments and set out the brief for the work of the subject development group. There were 13 responses to this first phase of consultation.

Submissions were in broad agreement with the analysis of the impact of the 1989 syllabus and of the need for change, although some respondents were anxious to point out that the narrow range of texts to which students referred in their answers in the Junior Certificate examinations was not reflective of the full picture.

We would like to point out that...students do, in fact, study a much broader range of texts over the three years, but that the texts teachers concentrate on in third year with a view to the exam are often the same texts year after year. Therefore the impression given in examinations that the focus is extremely narrow is not fully reflective of teaching practice. (School English department submission)

¹http://www.juniorcycle.ie/NCCA_JuniorCycle/media/NCCA/Documents/Curriculum/English_background_2012.pdf

Respondents welcomed the emphasis on oral language and its importance for literacy development. Submissions offered a number of suggestions for consideration by the development group, chiefly centring on prescription of texts and assessment.

Prescription of texts

It was suggested that where texts are to be prescribed, the list should encompass a broad range of literary genres. Prescription should be used to promote wide reading for girls and boys. Teachers should have freedom to choose texts that are relevant to their individual class groups. Prescribing texts would help to ensure an even standard in student reading during junior cycle. Teachers should be encouraged to offer suggestions for prescribed texts. If specific texts are to be prescribed, then the list should include a wide range of texts and the cycle of texts should be laid out well in advance.

Teachers are open to the idea of prescription of texts but would also like to be able to offer suggestions for prescribed texts. The idea of a three year cycle of prescribed texts is something worthy of consideration. (Teacher submission)

Course design and assessment

Respondents linked the prescription of texts with questions of course design and assessment. Among the suggestions were that the Syllabus Unit, a feature of the 1989 syllabus, could be given consideration *as a support for the new specification*.

Regarding assessment, submissions were somewhat divided. Some focused on proposed changes to the arrangements for assessment leading to certification, seeing the impact on the relationship between teacher and student as lamentable. Others saw the changes as offering teachers an opportunity to add to their professional skills. All were agreed that the changes would require clear guidelines, sustained support and resourcing.

The new Junior Cycle English is an exciting opportunity and I am looking forward to the changes it will bring in many ways, particularly as I was very disillusioned by the way the examining of the students has not previously been in tandem with the syllabus. Fundamentally I think that the quality of the resources made available to the teachers is critical. Such support will need to be on an on-going, continuous basis if consistency in teaching and learning is to occur. (Teacher submission)

The point was made that the specification should highlight assessment for different purposes and that it should at all times be clearly linked to learning outcomes. For that

reason, it was argued that the components related to assessment for certification should be carefully thought out.

One submission contained a critique of the impact of Higher and Ordinary levels on teaching and learning in English.

We found the proposal to maintain the old system of two levels (Ordinary & Higher) disappointing. We believe it represents a missed opportunity to bring about innovation and change in this fundamental area of the curriculum.

Arguing that the terminology associated with Ordinary and Higher levels is *belittling* and noting *too great a disparity between the standards and expectations between the two levels*, this submission proposed an alternative model.

The old distinction of Higher and Ordinary made sense in a system of streaming. However, currently the department advocates mixed ability teaching; that being the case, a system incorporating stages of progress seems much more appropriate than the limited two-level approach... There should be enough scope in such a stage-like system to provide successes for the student that struggles and adequate challenges of the student that easily excels. (School English department submission)

The work of the Development Group for Junior Cycle English

The development group began its work in September 2012 and to date it has met on eight occasions. Two reports on the work of the development group were published on <http://www.juniorcycle.ie/Curriculum/Subjects/English>. These reports provided updates and information on the issues under discussion and broad outlines of decisions taken. Reports of the work of the development group on generating a new specification for English have also been presented to the Board for Junior Cycle and to Council at a number of meetings. Feedback from these meetings has also informed the development of the specification by the development group.

Consultation with the Junior Cycle School Network

Ongoing consultation with the Junior Cycle Network has taken a number of forms. For example, work on the development of annotated examples of student work for inclusion in

the *Expectations for Learners* section of the draft specification has involved teachers from the network. Through their involvement in this work the teachers have taken part in sessions to explore the school-focused moderation process. Video evidence from these sessions will become part of the general assessment material, and the material specific to English included in the Assessment and Moderation Toolkit. During the current school year and beyond, English teachers in network schools will continue to work with the NCCA, generating further examples of student work and assessment tasks.

Consultation on the draft specification

The phase of consultation on the draft specification for Junior Cycle English began in April and concluded in September, 2013. Features of this phase included:

- online survey
- written submissions
- engagement with teachers through focus groups
- online facility through which suggestions for texts suitable for use in junior cycle were gathered
- a consultation conference held on September 12th 2013
- a webinar held on September 17th 2013 to discuss some of the themes from the conference.

The online survey had two options for completion: a detailed questionnaire and a short, open-ended survey. There were 173 responses to the detailed questionnaire, 66% of which came from teachers of English, and 199 responses to the short format, with 71% from teachers of English. Seventeen written submissions were made (see Appendix 1). Three focus group meetings with teachers were held, one in Cork and one in Dublin for teachers from a range of mainstream schools. The third focus group meeting, with teachers of English in special schools, was organised by the National Association of Boards of Management in Special Education (NABMSE). Other education bodies and organisations also held consultation meetings that the NCCA was not directly involved in. Through the online facility provided, in excess of 300 suggestions for suitable texts were submitted (see sample of recommended texts in Appendix 2).

The consultation conference brought together some 120 teachers of English to discuss the themes emerging through the consultation and to discuss the impact of the specification on teaching and learning in English in the future. It was structured as a number of workshops facilitated by teachers of English who looked at how the particular aspects of the new specification would impact on learning, teaching and assessment in their classrooms and sought the views of participants on these and other consultation themes. A few days later a webinar (or web-based seminar) was held. The 45 participants received presentations on the specification for Junior Cycle English and responded with comments and discussion.

The level of response across various elements of the consultation was noteworthy. The response to the online questionnaires and the invitation to suggest texts was well in excess of the norm for consultation on a subject specification. Of note, this was the first consultation supported by NCCA's Twitter feed. The invitation to schools to attend the consultation conference attracted a response from 410 schools, from which the 120 who attended were randomly selected. This is an element of consultation that may be repeated in other subjects, though a number of participants felt that it would be better held mid-way rather than at the end of the consultation period. The webinar, NCCA's first venture at consulting through this medium, was also a success with much gained both technically and procedurally that will benefit future consultations. The potential to reach and engage with a wide audience through a relatively straightforward and inexpensive medium was particularly noteworthy here.

Because the specification for English was being developed in the broad context of the junior cycle developments and, in particular, because it was the first specification under development it is not surprising that respondents to the consultation made observations and raised issues whose import went beyond English. The next section of the report focuses on the emerging themes from the consultation, which are grouped into two categories: issues specific to English and issues relating to the broader junior cycle developments and systemic supports in a time of significant curriculum and assessment change.

Themes and feedback from the consultation

The questions posed during the consultation focused on:

- the rationale, aim, and overview sections of the specification
- the scope of the learning outcomes and how well they link to the examples of student work
- the literacy and numeracy dimensions of the specification
- the approach to prescribing texts
- the number and nature of the assessment tasks for the School Work Component
- the scope of the Final Assessment
- the overall scope of the specification and its implications for students and teachers.

A number of broad points emerged from the responses. The overall quality and thrust of the specification was welcomed as was the emphasis it places on the development of oral language. There was a significant body of commentary around the question of how to address prescription of texts in ways that contribute to students encountering and reading a broad range of texts. Anxiety was expressed regarding teacher assessment of their own students for certification purposes. Respondents also felt that the timing and quality of the supporting professional development would be of critical importance. These and other points are addressed in more detail in the following pages.

The rationale, aim, and overview sections

Respondents agreed that the rationale and aim were clear and appropriate for English in junior cycle. They saw the strands as providing a clear structure and agreed that the learning outcomes were clear and unambiguous. In general they expressed a preference for more detail about the course they should teach being included in the overview section.

We like the mention of 'pleasure' associated with the classroom and note that this will be continued in the new Junior Cycle. We currently help our students to achieve most of what is mentioned here. (Submission)

The literacy and numeracy dimensions of the specification

There was very strong agreement that the literacy dimension of the specification is clear and supportive of student learning in this area. The references to the promotion of numeracy were less well received, attracting some negative commentary as evidenced in the following:

Some aspects here are tenuous and/or forced. Is it intended that these relate to learning outcomes? (Online survey)

The learning outcomes

There was a strong level of agreement, over 80% in the case of the online surveys, that the learning outcomes across the three strands were appropriate to the development of oral language, reading and writing. However, some online respondents did raise concerns about the number and the complexity of the learning outcomes.

I believe that there are too many outcomes, and that these could be condensed without loss of content. (Online survey)

Some outcomes are too ambitious e.g. 'Appreciate how the meaning of sentences can be made richer through the use of grammatical and/or syntactical manipulation'. (Online survey)

There was strong support for the inclusion of oral literacy and the learning outcomes associated with it in the specification.

Excited by this element of the spec; I'm happy to see the weighting of oral language in the assessment too, big change but an interesting one as far as I'm concerned. (Online survey)

The approach to prescribing texts

There was something of a mixed reaction to the question of prescription. While few respondents would wish to retain a fully open course, many expressed a preference for the retention of some level of choice – for variety sake, to facilitate differentiation, to accommodate the local dimension, and so on. In general, respondents would appear to favour a model in which the number and types of texts would be prescribed but where teachers and students could choose texts from a list of recommendations.

Please have a model of rolling prescription with a fair time lapse between the roll of the materials, which allows teachers to become familiar with the materials before an imposed change. (Online survey)

I think teachers should continue to be allowed to choose their own whilst having access to a list of recommendations. The current list on the website of teachers' submissions is fantastic; it's great to see so many options and ideas. (Online survey)

The list should be given out more than six months in advance, as is presently the case with the texts for study for the Leaving Cert. The poetry for Leaving Cert is indicated up to four years ahead. Something similar should be done with a prescriptive text list for the new Junior Cycle. (Submission)

I strongly dislike prescribed texts at junior level. One aspect of the current JC which I really like is the scope I have to choose wide and varied material to teach. I would like it to be a recommended list rather than prescribed. (Online survey)

This suggestion will limit the freedom of the teacher to use new high quality literary texts in the Junior Cycle classroom. Exploring contemporary poetry, drama and fiction is a necessary element of Junior Cycle English. It is one area where the quality of engagement depends to a great extent on the judgement of the teacher who should be free to introduce a fresh text chosen with a view to the needs of a particular group of students. The proposal to publish set lists of texts flies in the face of the stated aim to encourage a 'wide' range of engagement with a 'variety' of texts. It is, however, necessary to prescribe indicative lists of genre which should be studied as part of the Junior Cycle experience. This is one aspect of the current Junior Cert. syllabus which I value as a teacher. I am free to choose a novel, short story, play or poem on the basis of my knowledge of a particular group of students. It encourages me to think carefully about the literary texts I introduce them to in the course of the Junior Cycle. Removing this freedom discourages teacher creativity and individual engagement with new developments in literature. It would be useful to offer indicative lists or suggestions without insisting that teachers must choose texts from a prescribed list of specific texts. There should be consistency between the approach taken to selecting literary and non-literary texts. (Online survey)

Naturally, some respondents linked the question of prescription with preferences regarding pace and coverage.

I agree with lists of texts for Drama and Fiction but feel they are unnecessary for poetry. If they were to be included for poetry, an idea might be to specify poets rather than individual poetry. The suggestions for the amount of texts to be covered in First Year English are far too onerous. My colleagues and I prefer to study less texts but in more depth. Studying one challenging novel is more beneficial than reading two easy ones. (Online survey)

Other perspectives on this question related to resources, both in terms of availability of texts and cost.

There is merit to a degree of rolling prescription, however sufficient attention must be given to costs, availability, and range of student ability in a mixed ability classroom. It is hard to find texts that challenge students at the higher levels of ability which are also readily accessible to students who may struggle. Schools are imposing limits on photocopying teachers may do, the new maths syllabus alone exhausts these limits. (Online survey)

The assessment components and arrangements

There was considerable commentary on the number and nature of the assessment tasks for the School Work Component of assessment, and for the Final Assessment. In the case of the online survey, opinions expressed differed quite sharply in relation to the number and nature of the assessment tasks. Although no clear preference emerged regarding the number of assessment tasks, concerns regarding time and manageability were frequently voiced.

I'm very worried about whether I as a teacher will have adequate time to explore these three components in enough detail to do them justice...there is simply not enough time in schools today...these components seem a little too ambitious and I question whether the people behind them have been teaching in schools recently???? They are a great idea but I seriously doubt they will be covered in the allocated time. (Online survey)

This will be a problem, as other subjects come into play. There could be a log-jam of assessment in multiple subjects, which would take time from teaching and learning. Logistical problems. (Online survey)

Of the three assessment tasks oral presentation was the one that represented the greatest level of challenge. Nonetheless, respondents frequently asserted its potential to support learning and development.

The approach to assessing the oral component will need careful management. The best would be an oral interview, but this could be costly and time-consuming. But the advantage would be, as at third level, that it would quickly establish the pupil's real competence and would cut out plagiarism and copied work. (Online survey)

The oral aspect may favour more outgoing students. However, the skills to develop confidence and a presentation style can be developed by way of study, practice and collaborating with others in advance of the presentation. We are all confident when we know what we are talking about! (Online survey)

...very difficult for SEN students, particularly ASD students, to engage with oral and group tasks (Online survey)

This point concerning the challenge of oral presentation for students with specific learning difficulties or disabilities was echoed in the consultation with teachers from special schools organised by NABMSE, where the concern that guidelines on reasonable accommodations would be generated for the assessment tasks was expressed. The use of flexible assessment arrangements, for example the replacement of spoken language with Irish Sign Language (ISL) in this assessment task was suggested.

Some respondents were of the view that the oral presentation would place too much emphasis on the presentational dimension and would like this aspect reconsidered.

The oral presentation should be altered to include a conversation. Oral presentations are in danger of becoming rehearsed and rote learned. The ability to hold a conversation and take part in a structured interview would be an excellent method of assessing oral competency. (Online survey)

I think that the introduction of an oral component is laudable. I teach LCVP and I am often dismayed that normally confident, outgoing students can crumble under the perceived pressure of an oral interview. Anything which will build confidence in oral communication is to be welcomed. I particularly like the fact that they can present on any topic of interest to them. (Written submission)

There was strong agreement that the assessment tasks linked well to the strands, and that the tasks would assess students' learning appropriately. Concern was expressed that the Critical Reading task would be too demanding for students of this age and would consequently become dominated by teacher direction.

I am unsure how free the critical reading will be, and to what extent it will be chosen, and directed by the teacher. I would be concerned that the students will end up parroting what they need to get a pass without understanding what they write. (Online survey)

The Personal Writing task was seen as having greater potential than suggested by the draft specification, whose current draft might lead to a minimalist approach being taken. Some respondents felt that there was insufficient emphasis placed on process, and that the opportunities it offered to monitor the student's development as a writer over time might not be exploited.

Students do a selection of writing activities and then chose one to submit for summative assessment... Teachers and students might select to do just one piece. The old JC syllabus was great but was hampered by a narrow assessment. I would like to see students keeping a portfolio of pieces - maybe three with all being assessed. (Online survey)

The responses on the Final Assessment are somewhat neutral with some respondents feeling that the draft specification did not provide sufficient detail.

The overall scope of the specification

The final part of the questionnaire asked respondents to comment on the overall scope of the specification and its implications for teachers and students. Here, as in other areas of the consultation, opinions were divided. The following short extracts from the online survey capture something of the range of feelings expressed, between one who felt that the specification did not go far enough and another who felt that it had gone far too far.

This "new" specification at last gives value to oral competency in language and promotes an integrated approach to the teaching of English. While digital media is included I feel perhaps that more emphasis should be placed on this area- this after all is the vernacular of modern teens. The weaknesses of this specification lie in the planned prescription of texts and the lack of an interview as a mode of formal assessment. The timing of the other components of the school based assessment is questionable. (Online survey)

I am consumed with fear of a further erosion of literacy standards. I have watched the slow slide over forty years. Younger people have not observed this. They are all caught up in meaningless jargon about critical skills and learning outcomes. This all sounds formulaic and bureaucratic. I will now go and make a cup of tea and calm down. (Online survey)

Commentary on the broader junior cycle developments and resourcing the change

As English was the first draft specification consulted on, some commentary naturally ranged beyond the confines of the subject. Many responses expressed concern about the role played by school-based moderation in the junior cycle developments as a whole. It was felt that not enough was known about exactly how it would work, what the specific in-

school arrangements would be, such as the timing of the assessment and moderation events and how moderation would be facilitated within the school. Anxiety was expressed about the changing role of the teacher and his/her relationship with students. School-based assessment would be very challenging, it was suggested, for small, rural schools where communities might be impacted upon by the changed relationships implied. There was uncertainty about how a standard would be set and maintained, and about how evenly it would be applied from school to school. 'Whose expectations?' was a frequently asked question, accompanied by the view that standard would vary dramatically from school to school. It was felt that the new assessment arrangements would accelerate competition between schools, leading to greater inequity within the system.

I must confess that I have qualms about grading my own students on these endeavours. It will not be easy to be entirely objective or to trust completely in the objectivity of teachers in other schools. I worry that some students will be unfairly advantaged and I worry that some teachers may feel pressurised to give high marks to particular students. While the current system is undoubtedly flawed, I at least had confidence that it was fair. (Written submission)

The number of school assessment tasks is not the issue. The quality and standard of assessment is the real concern. The current proposals rest too heavily on individual teachers and schools to set and maintain an objective standard of English. (Online survey)

The assertion was made that teachers were not consulted about the developments, that the change was being imposed upon them. Particular reference was made to changing from an assessment system based on State examinations to one with school-based assessment at its core.

The gravitas of a State exam is valued by pupil, parent, employer and teacher due to its independent, anonymous assessment. There is a presumption of fairness in the procedure. While the present Junior Certificate exam duplicates the assessment of some skills, it does provide a shape to the course studied by every student. (Submission)

There was also considerable commentary about the need to resource change on the scale envisaged effectively. In this context, the need for extensive continuing professional development (CPD), for time to prepare for the introduction of the new English specification and for classroom planning, for time and personnel to conduct moderation

processes and meetings were frequently cited. Scepticism that these resources would be made available was frequently expressed, especially at a time when the resource pressures already felt by schools before any change is introduced is considerable.

I am happy enough. What matters now is the quality of support, resources and CPD available to us. We have to plan and have everything ready within a short space of time so the more help we can get to work things out in our own schools the better for our students. (Online survey)

Having read the draft I feel this is a positive step for teaching and learning. I feel that this new step forward will in many ways prepare students for the transition into senior cycle, as it introduces and encourages the student to engage in personal response at Jr cycle, an integral part of senior English. While I am positive about making steps forward and open to change I do feel the proposed in-service will be vital come Sept 2014, will be not only vital but should be comprehensive and continuous. (Online survey)

Feedback from principals thus indicates a perceived need for significant meeting time for the subject department as ideas and approaches are shared amongst its members. While CPD or school time issues are not within the remit of this document, it should be patently clear to the DES that taking a minimalist, cost-saving approach to this first engagement with the Framework will send negative messages throughout the school and inhibit any reaching of its potential.

If, however, the learning expectations framed in the document can be realised, it will have made a significant contribution to the quality of life of the young people it serves and will leave them well-placed for the transition to senior cycle. (Submission)

Feedback from the Consultation Conference

The final elements of the consultation were the conference involving at least 120 teachers of English and the ensuing webinar. The outcomes of both, in addition to those of other elements of the consultation, have already contributed to the finalisation of the specification. The main points emerging from the conference and webinar are presented below.

On assessment and moderation

Participants felt that:

- protection of standard, within and between schools, would be very challenging
- local issues would arise where teachers were assessing their own students for certification
- time and management of the moderation process needed to be clarified and was likely to prove extremely challenging
- combining the results from common level assessments with the results of differentiated examinations (Higher and Ordinary levels) in the final assessment would be problematic
- pupil/teacher relationships would suffer in the changed assessment context
- the features of quality outlined in the draft specification may be too narrow
- the proposed new grading categories and bands need to be reviewed, especially the breadth of the 'Not Achieved' grade and its title
- it was unsure how assessment in the new specification would link with Leaving Certificate
- they were unclear as to whether students would get results from the assessments as they were completed
- moderation was in itself a mode of professional development and a significant opportunity for dialogue
- stress for students would be lessened, the emphasis shifting to the development of skills over time
- improvement of students' literacy skills would be an outcome.

On oral language in the classroom

Participants felt that:

- there would be a strong welcome for the emphasis on oral skills
- a strength of the specification in this regard was that it was not too detailed, allowing teachers and students to ‘make our own of it’
- the language of the Leaving Certificate syllabus could be used to describe the specification for junior cycle
- continuing professional development would be vital

On English in the digital age

Participants felt that:

- care needed to be taken, not to see digital literacy as an ‘add-on’ to the specification
- resources were vital in this context
- teachers would need to develop new skills
- availability of technology would be a challenge
- there might not be equal access to resources
- great potential resided in the immediacy of digital media and in their power to captivate.

On planning a programme of work for first year students

Participants felt that:

- the specification was very ‘usable’
- there was a gap between the learning outcomes and the assessment models that required to be addressed
- key challenges in bringing the specification to life were time and professional development.

On teaching poetry in first year

Participants felt that:

- the use of rich texts and a focus on the learning process was valued by the learning outcomes

- it would be necessary to find different entry points into texts in order to facilitate differentiated teaching
- the teacher would need to learn to be a facilitator of learning, promoting collaboration and active learning in students
- planning for the group as much as the individual, for collaborative learning, would be needed
- teachers should engineer things so that the students learn from each other as well as from the teacher.

Appendix 1: Draft specification for Junior cycle English – submissions received

Source of submission	Lead name
Irish Film Institute	Alicia Mc Givern, Education Officer
Coláiste Cois Life, Gleann an Ghrifín, Leamhcán, Co.Átha Cliath	Diana Ní Rossa, Róisín Ní Mhóráin, Lisa Ní Cheallacháin
St Angela's College, Cork	Sarah Chamers
Mountrath Community College, Co. Laois	Mary O'Farrell
English teacher	Ann Marie Purcell
Deansrath Community College, Clondalkin, Dublin 22	Ollie Power
English Teacher	Joanne Ford
Professor of Drama and Theatre, NUIG	Patrick Lonergan
Coláiste Ghobnatan, Baile Mhic Íre, Co. Chorcaí	Toirdealbhach Ó Lionáird, Leas-Phríomhoide
Irish National Organisation for Teachers of English (INOTE)	Mary O'Farrell
Arts Council	Gaye Tanham
Joint Managerial Body for Secondary Schools (JMB)	Michael Redmond, JMB Research and Development Officer
Abbey Theatre	Phil Kingston
English teacher	Fiona Kirwan
English teacher	Deirdre Scully
English teacher	Jimmy Staunton, Sligo Grammar School (Composite report of meeting in Sligo)
English teacher	Ollie Power, Deansrath Community College

Appendix 2: Sample selection of texts for English recommended by teachers

Text Name	Author/Director
True Grit	Charles Portis
Trash	Andy Mulligan
The Shadow of the North	Philip Pullman
To Kill a Mockingbird	Harper Lee
The Knife of Never Letting Go	Patrick Ness
The Hobbit	JRR Tolkien
A Kestrel for a Knave	Barry Hines
Warhorse	Michael Morpurgo
Light on Snow	Anita Shreve
Skellig	David Almond
Valentina	Kevin McDermott
Pirates	Celia Rees
Life: An Exploded Diagram	Mal Peet
Flowers for Algernon	Daniel Keyes
The Serious Kiss	Mary Hogan
Benny and Omar	Eoin Colfer
Star Girl	Jenny Spinell
Bridge to Terabithia	Katherine Paterson
Fever Pitch	Nick Hornby
The Diary of a Young Girl	Anne Frank
Our Day Out	Willie Russell
Blood Brothers	Willie Russell
Shadow of a Gunman	Sean O'Casey
Riders to the Sea	JM Synge
Lovers	Brian Friel
A Midsummer Night's Dream	William Shakespeare
Romeo and Juliet	William Shakespeare
The Merchant of Venice	William Shakespeare
The Searchers	John Ford

Billy Elliot	Stephen Daldry
Into the West	Mike Newell
The Birds	Alfred Hitchcock
The Outsiders	Francis Ford Coppola
Best websites: Education	Telegraph
101 Excellent Sites for English Educators	GoEd
Integrating Digital technology	Teach Net
Thicker Than Water: Coming-of-Age Stories by Irish & Irish American Writers	Editor: Gordon Snell
The New Windmill Book of Short Stories	Mike Royston (Ed)
The New Windmill Book of Short Stories from Other Times	Louise Naylor (Ed)
Short Stories for Students	Gale Series
	Roger McGough
Much Ado About Nothing	William Shakespeare
Adrian Mitchell	Back in the Playground Blues, Especially When it Snows, Human Beings, Most People...
ET	Stephen Spielberg
Howl's Moving Castle	Hayao Miyazaki
Somerstown	Shane Meadows
The Night of the Hunter	Charles Laughton
Stand by Me	Rob Reiner
The Runway	Ian Power
Poets	Carol Ann Duffy
	William Wall
	Simon Armitage
	William Wordsworth
	Patrick Kavanagh
	Brendan Kennelly
	Ted Hughes
	Seamus Heaney
	Mary Oliver
	Leanne O'Sullivan
	Liz Loxley
	Elizabeth Jennings

	Michael Rosen
	Wilfred Owen
	Sinead Morrissey
	Wendy Cope
	WB Yeats
	William Shakespeare
Romeo and Juliet	William Shakespeare
Wonder	R.J. Palacio
Brothers	Andrew Forster
Citizen of the World	Dave Calder
Goodnight Mister Tom	Michelle Magorian
The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas	John Boyne
Dancing at Lughnasa	Brian Friel
Rabbit Proof Fence	Phillip Noyce
Whale Rider	Niki Caro
Anita and Me	Meera Syal
poetry of Rita Ann Higgins	
Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening	Robert Frost
The Road not Taken	
A Christmas Carol	Charles Dickens
Nothing Gold Can Stay	Robert Frost
Lisdoonvarna	Christy Moore