GrindSpot
ONLINE GRINDS PLATFORM

LEAVING CERT 2027

LEAVING CERT ENGLISH

Exam Ready

Ordinary Level · Paper 2 · Workbook A

Dyslexia friendly
large, clear text · room to write

Built from 9 years of real Leaving Cert papers: what comes up, how it's marked, and the practice to nail it.

- **9** years of exam trends, question by question
- **32** exam-style drills with model answers
- **1** full practice paper on the 2027 course
- ✓ marking guide for the practice paper



Know what's coming.
Walk in ready.

Original GrindSpot material written in the style of the Leaving Certificate examination. Not an official SEC paper.

What comes up

2017 to 2026

We read every Ordinary Level Paper 2 from the last 9 exams (no exam in 2020) and noted what each question asked. Hero, Heroine, Villain is not a mode for 2027. We counted what each question asked about, not which text it was on: a single-text question counts once, even when every text had its own version. Poetry questions count once for each poem they were asked on (four to six poems a year), so the poetry rows run higher than the rest: compare them by the Years column.

	2017	2018	2019	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Years
Prescribed poetry: style and language	4	4	4	6	6	6	6	6	6	9/9
Prescribed poetry: themes and ideas	4	4	4	6	6	6	6	6	6	9/9
Prescribed poetry: personal response	4	1	4	6	6	6	6	6	6	9/9
Single text: key moments and plot	1	1	4	2	3	3	2	3	2	9/9
Single text: reader's response and relevance	2	2	2	1	4	3	1	3	2	9/9
Single text: character	3	3	2	1	2	2	1	1	2	9/9
Single text: creative writing task	1	–	1	1	2	1	2	2	3	8/9
Comparative: hero, heroine, villain	2	2	–	–	2	2	2	–	2	6/9
Comparative: relationships	–	–	2	2	2	2	–	2	2	6/9
Comparative: social setting	–	2	–	2	2	–	2	2	2	6/9
Comparative: theme	2	–	2	2	–	2	2	2	–	6/9
Single text: theme or issue	–	2	2	2	2	1	1	–	1	7/9
Single text: author's technique and style	1	1	2	1	1	1	3	–	–	7/9
Single text: relationships	1	1	2	2	1	1	–	1	–	7/9
Unseen poem: meaning and ideas	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9/9
Unseen poem: personal response	1	1	1	–	1	1	1	–	–	6/9
Unseen poem: language, imagery and tone	–	–	–	–	1	1	1	1	1	5/9

Darker = more questions. Source: State Examinations Commission papers, 2017 to 2026, read and grouped by GrindSpot. Every question we counted is listed at **grindspot.ie/exam-trends**. A guide to what has come up, not a prediction of what will.

Characters and key moments every year.

Creative tasks on your text in 8 of 9 papers.

Poetry: a favourite image, the tone, a creative task.

Each 2027 comparative mode was in 4 or 5 of the 6 papers since 2021.

TOPIC 8

The prescribed poem

Worked answers →

In the real exam

Every paper, 2017 to 2026: 50 marks on one printed poem: an image, the theme or tone, then a creative task.



Fionn's tip: The poem is printed on the paper, so quote it. This drill uses a different course poem from the practice paper. In Question 2, get the form right.

1. Read this poem from your course.

> **An Irish Airman Foresees his Death · W.B. Yeats**
>
> I know that I shall meet my fate
> Somewhere among the clouds above;
> Those that I fight I do not hate,
> Those that I guard I do not love;
> My country is Kiltartan Cross,
> My countrymen Kiltartan's poor,
> No likely end could bring them loss
> Or leave them happier than before.
> Nor law, nor duty bade me fight,
> Nor public men, nor cheering crowds,
> A lonely impulse of delight
> Drove to this tumult in the clouds;
> I balanced all, brought all to mind,
> The years to come seemed waste of breath,
> A waste of breath the years behind
> In balance with this life, this death.

Pick one image or phrase and explain why it appeals to you.

2. What is the tone of "An Irish Airman Foresees his Death"? Use two quotations.

B · Ozymandias · Percy Bysshe Shelley

I met a traveller from an antique land,
Who said—"Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
Stand in the desert. . . . Near them, on the sand,
Half sunk a shattered visage lies, whose frown,
And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command,
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,
The hand that mocked them, and the heart that fed;
And on the pedestal, these words appear:
My name is Ozymandias, King of Kings;
Look on my Works, ye Mighty, and despair!
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
Of that colossal Wreck, boundless and bare
The lone and level sands stretch far away."

1. (a) Identify one image or descriptive phrase from this poem that appeals to you. Explain why it appeals to you. Support your response with reference to the poem. 15

(b) What do you think the poem is saying about power? Explain your answer. Support your answer with reference to the poem. 15

2. Answer ONE of the following. [Each part carries 20 marks] 20
(i) Imagine you are Percy Bysshe Shelley and you have just finished writing "Ozymandias". Write a diary entry in which you reflect on the ideas in the poem and on some of the words and images you chose.
(ii) You are taking part in a radio programme called *Poems That Last*. Write the text of your contribution, explaining why "Ozymandias" is still worth reading today.
(iii) Choose four words from the poem that you think are perfectly chosen by the poet. Explain why each word works so well.

There is no single right answer in English. For each question this guide gives **what a good answer would include** (the kind of points examiners look for, not a full list), then **the marks** and a guide to how marks are awarded, in the style of the SEC marking schemes (our guide, not an official scheme). Longer answers are marked on **P** Clarity of Purpose, **C** Coherence of Delivery, **L** Efficiency of Language Use (30% each) and **M** Accuracy of Mechanics (10%). Answer the question asked and back up every point with a moment from the text.

Section I · The Single Text (60 marks: two questions of 30)

How to answer. Name characters and describe real moments from your text. Do what each part asks: "three moments" means three, each explained. The examples below use *A Raisin in the Sun*, *Sive* and *Othello*; the same approach works for every text.

Q1 (a) e.g. Walter Younger in *A Raisin in the Sun*: at the start, frustrated and selfish, obsessed with the liquor store; at the end, he refuses Mr Lindner's money and Mama says "He finally come into his manhood today": he puts family pride first.
(b) e.g. in *Othello*, the moment Othello demands "ocular proof" and Iago describes the handkerchief: the audience knows it is a lie.
(c) e.g. ask Mena in *Sive*, "Did you ever feel sorry for selling Sive to Seán Dóta?", because she seems hard but was once poor and unhappy herself.
Q1: 10 marks per part (P + C 6, L + M 4) · *Good answer:* a clear point, a specific moment, and an explanation · *Weaker:* general statements with no moments

Q2 An article: a headline, an opening that states your view, three moments, a conclusion. e.g. *A Raisin in the Sun*: strength (Mama uses the insurance money to buy a house for the whole family; the family moves together at the end) and problem (Walter loses the money to Willy Harris; arguments over Beneatha's plans).
Q3 Three decisions, each with what it shows and its result: e.g. *Sive*: Mike and Mena agree to the match for money (greed); Nanna helps Sive and Liam (love); Sive runs out into the night (despair), with the tragic result.
Q4 A talk: greet the book club, recommend the text, give reasons from characters, story and themes, and end with an invitation to read it.