

HKDSE Literature in English Paper 1 Mock Paper (2027)

TutorZone 備考練習題 · Questions, Model Answers and Marking Scheme

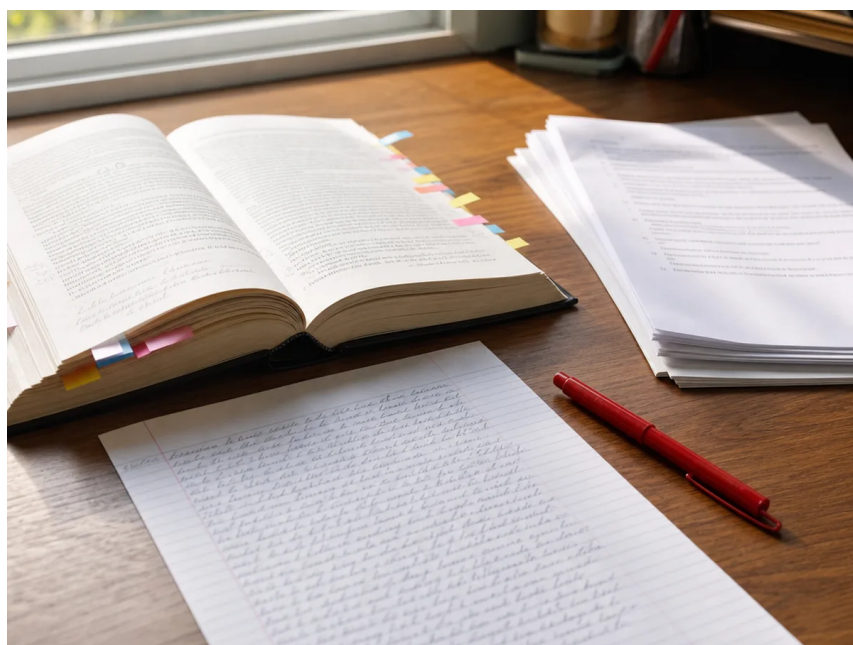
TUTORZONE EXAM PRACTICE · DSE LITERATURE IN ENGLISH, PAPER 1 MOCK PAPER

An original TutorZone mock paper for HKDSE Literature in English Paper 1 (Essay Writing), written against the **2027 assessment framework**: one novel question in Section A, one play question in Section B and one short-story comparison in Section C inside three hours. The full paper comes with model answers, a level-based marking scheme, answer plans for every question, the mistakes markers see most often, and Paper 2 samples. Print it, time it, mark it.

Direct Answer: What does HKDSE Literature in English Paper 1 require?

Paper 1 Essay Writing is worth **50% of the subject** and lasts **3 hours**. It has three sections and candidates answer **one question in each**: Section A one question on one of two set novels (*Rebecca* or *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*), Section B one question on one of two set plays (*The Merchant of Venice* or *Top Girls*), and Section C one question comparing two or more set short stories. Every answer is an essay; some questions invite imaginative expansion of the text. Paper 2 Appreciation is worth 30% (2 hours) and School-based Assessment 20%. All questions on this page are original TutorZone material, not past HKEAA questions, and model answers are provided below.

Downloadable version: want to print the paper and work under timed conditions? [Download the PDF \(questions, model answers and marking scheme\)](#).



An annotated set text with sticky tabs, a handwritten essay and a marking pen — HKDSE Literature in English Paper 1 mock paper

The 2027 exam at a glance (read this before you attempt anything)

Component	Weighting	Duration	What the 2027 paper asks for
Paper 1 Essay Writing	50%	3 hours	Section A novels (choose one of two; two questions on each); Section B plays (choose one of two; two questions on each); Section C short stories (compare two or more). One question per section.
Paper 2 Appreciation	30%	2 hours	Section A critical analysis of a passage from a set novel or play (choose 1 of 4; 10% of the subject mark); Section B comparison of two or three set poems (choose 1 of 2; 12%); Section C unseen poem (one question; 8%).
SBA (School-based Assessment)	20%	—	A film-centred analytical study or essay of about 2,000–2,500 words. Private candidates skip the SBA; their result is based entirely on the public examination.

Paper 1 time budget (180 minutes)	Minutes	What to do
Choosing and planning	15	Read every question in all three sections first, then choose by the evidence you can recall, not by the question that sounds easiest.
Section A novel	50	Start with your strongest text; decide your thesis before you write the first sentence.
Section B play	50	Drama demands stagecraft, dialogue and dramatic irony — do not analyse a play as if it were a novel.
Section C comparison	45	Sustain one comparative axis (irony of endings, the cost of freedom) across both stories instead of writing two mini-essays.
Checking	20	Verify every quotation and confirm you have answered the exact wording of the question.

⚠ Do not revise with the old framework

Up to 2025 Paper 1 used a different structure: Part I (four sections — novels, plays, films, short stories — answer two questions from different sections, 30% of the subject mark) and Part II (eight cross-text comparison questions, answer one, 20%, covering a genre not used in Part I). **From 2026 Paper 1 is Sections A–C, one question each:** films no longer appear in Paper 1 (they are SBA material only), and Section C must compare two or more short stories. Many 2023–2025 “Paper 1 tips” articles still describe the old paper, so always check the framework for your own examination year.

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Paper 1 mock paper (3 hours · original questions)

Instructions: Answer one question from each of Sections A, B and C — three questions in total. All answers must be written in essay form and must refer closely to the texts.

SECTION A — NOVELS (answer ONE question)

(a) *REBECCA* — *Daphne du Maurier*

- A1. 'In *Rebecca*, the dead have more power than the living.' Discuss this view with close reference to the novel.
- A2. 'The narrator has no name because she has no self — until the final chapters give her one.' How far do you agree? Support your answer with evidence from the novel.

(b) *THE PRIME OF MISS JEAN BRODIE* — Muriel Spark

- A3. 'Miss Brodie's "prime" is a performance that damages the girls she claims to love.' Discuss.
- A4. 'Sandy Stranger, not Miss Brodie, controls the novel's judgement.' How far do you agree?

SECTION B — PLAYS (answer ONE question)

(a) *THE MERCHANT OF VENICE* — William Shakespeare

- B1. 'Shylock is as much a victim of Venice as he is a villain within it.' Discuss with close reference to the play.
- B2. 'Portia wins the trial, but the last act shows that winning is not the same as justice.' Discuss.

(b) *TOP GIRLS* — Caryl Churchill

- B3. 'In *Top Girls*, every woman's success is paid for by another woman.' Discuss.
- B4. 'The play's three-part structure — the dream dinner, the 1980s employment agency, the 1970s kitchen — is the play's argument.' How far do you agree?

SECTION C — SHORT STORIES (compare TWO OR MORE; answer ONE question)

- C1. Compare how Dahl in 'Parson's Pleasure' and Chopin in 'The Story of an Hour' use irony to expose what their characters cannot see.
- C2. 'Both stories show that freedom is dangerous.' Compare the two writers' treatment of freedom and its cost.

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Marking scheme (mock) and what earns the top bands

HKEAA marks Paper 1 holistically against level descriptors rather than awarding fixed marks per question. The self-assessment grid below is TutorZone's own tool for marking your own scripts.

Descriptor	Weight	What the marker looks for
Relevance to the question	30%	Does the essay answer every key word in the question, or drift into plot summary?
Analysis and argument	30%	Is there an informed personal thesis? Does it explain the writer's choices, not only what happens?
Textual evidence	20%	Quotations are short, accurate and load-bearing; detail (names, settings, motifs) is used precisely.
Organisation	10%	Topic sentences in each paragraph; comparison essays sustain one axis throughout.
Language	10%	Literary terms used correctly (irony, dramatic irony, foreshadowing, motif); few grammatical or spelling errors.

Level	Typical performance
5**	A precise, independent argument that engages the tension inside the text (sympathy and condemnation held together), with economical, accurate quotation.
5	Strong analysis and well-chosen evidence; occasional generalisation and a few imprecise quotations.
4	Accurate understanding but largely descriptive; the thesis is thin and the wording of the question is only partly addressed.
3	Mostly retells the story with basic evidence and little analysis of technique.
2 or below	Misreads the question or the text; evidence does not support the argument; answers are too short.

Model answers (three full essays)

A1 model answer: 'In *Rebecca*, the dead have more power than the living.' (about 380 words)

Du Maurier builds *Rebecca* on a paradox: the title character dies before the novel begins, yet she governs every room at Manderley. The novel opens with the narrator's dream — 'Last night I dreamt I went to Manderley again' — and that sentence establishes the pattern of the whole book, in which the past is more vivid, more solid and more authoritative than the present.

The most obvious instrument of the dead woman's power is Mrs Danvers, who preserves Rebecca's bedroom as a shrine and uses it against the second wife: the narrator is made to feel that she is occupying a life that belongs to someone else. Rebecca's power works through objects and handwriting as much as through people — the monogrammed handkerchief, the sloping signature in a hotel register, the notepaper — so that the narrator's own identity is constantly measured against a rival who cannot answer back.

Yet it is Maxim, not Rebecca, who gives her this power, because he refuses to speak about her. His silence is what the second wife fills with fantasy; the more he withholds, the larger Rebecca grows. When he finally confesses, the confession collapses the myth: 'Rebecca' becomes a corrupt and dying woman rather than a goddess. The final fire at Manderley completes that movement. The dead do have more power than the living for almost the whole novel — but the ending shows that this power was manufactured by the living, and it burns with the house.

Examiner's note: this sits at Level 5: a clear thesis (the dead woman's power is manufactured by the living), accurate quotation, and the key word 'power' is addressed. For 5**, add one or two more precise details (for example what Mrs Danvers actually says about Rebecca) and explore the contradiction between sympathy and horror that the power creates.

B1 model answer: 'Shylock is as much a victim of Venice as he is a villain within it.' (about 380 words)

Shakespeare makes it impossible to separate Shylock's cruelty from the cruelty he has endured. Venice needs his money but despises his religion; the play shows this double standard before it shows the bond. Shylock's own defence — 'Hath not a Jew eyes?' — turns the Christian rhetoric of mercy back on the court, and its force comes from the fact that it is factually true.

The bond of 'an equal pound of your fair flesh' is, however, genuinely monstrous, and Shakespeare does not soften it: Shylock sharpens his knife in open court and refuses every offer of repayment. If he is a victim, he is also a man who has chosen revenge over the mercy he has so often been denied — and the play insists that he was taught this lesson by Antonio's insults and Jessica's betrayal.

What finally condemns Venice rather than Shylock is the sentence. The court strips him of his wealth and forces his conversion, then treats this as mercy: Gratiano's jeering at a broken man shows the Christians winning in the least Christian way possible. Portia's 'The quality of mercy is not strained' is true as an idea and hollow as a practice.

Shylock is therefore both villain and victim because Venice creates the conditions for both. The play neither acquits nor excuses him; it exposes the society that demands his conversion while never accepting him.

Examiner's note: the word 'both' is the hinge of the question. A 5** answer would also hold two contradictions together — Jessica's theft of the ring ('I had it of Leah when I was a bachelor') alongside Shylock's earlier wish that his daughter 'were dead at my foot'.

C1 model answer: how irony exposes what the characters cannot see (about 380 words)

Both stories end with a reversal that punishes a character for the very knowledge he or she believes to possess, but the writers place the irony differently.

Dahl's irony is structural and dramatic: the reader understands before Boggis does that he has talked himself out of a fortune. By insisting that the commode is 'firewood' except for its legs, Boggis supplies the farmer with the logic that destroys the treasure — the legs are sawn off and the rest of the piece is chopped up before he returns. The comedy is the comedy of self-defeat: the trickster is beaten by his own script, and the reader's pleasure lies in watching the trap close on the man who set it.

Chopin's irony is quieter and works against the reader's expectation. Mrs Mallard's 'Free! Body and soul free!' is not presented as wickedness but as liberation, and the story refuses to punish her for it until the doctor's final diagnosis: she dies 'of heart disease — of joy that kills'. The irony is that her death is misread even as it is recorded: the freedom that killed her is named as joy.

Both writers therefore expose a gap between what characters perceive and what their worlds assume. Dahl's gap is moral and comic, aimed at Boggis's greed and at the rural family's innocence; Chopin's gap is social, aimed at the institution of marriage and at the medical language that closes over a woman's inner life. In both, irony is not decoration but the argument itself.

Examiner's note: comparison questions live or die on a single axis — here, 'who is the irony aimed at?' For 5**, add one sentence on the different *kinds* of irony: Dahl's is dramatic (the reader knows first), Chopin's is situational (the reader is deceived too).

Answer plans for the remaining questions, and the mistakes to avoid

Question	Must include	Most common error
A2 the unnamed narrator	Namelessness as social and psychological immaturity; letters, ghost-writing and copying Rebecca's handwriting as images of losing the self; Maxim's confession and the burning of Manderley give her a voice at last.	Saying only that 'the author chose not to give her a name' without linking it to power or gender.
A3 Miss Brodie's prime	'Prime' as self-mythology (Mussolini, Fascist Italy, the Rome trip); the girls as her 'works of art'; the cost — Sandy's betrayal and Joyce Emily Hammond's death in the Spanish Civil War; the time-shifts that defer judgement.	Turning Miss Brodie into a simple villain and ignoring her charisma and genuine affection.
A4 Sandy as judge	Sandy's 'seeing through' others; the narrative point of view resting with her; her later life as a nun as a continuation of watching and renunciation.	Proving the point with plot alone and never discussing Spark's ironic tone.
B2 victory versus justice	The courtroom 'victory' won on a technicality (not one drop of blood); the ring plot mocking male authority; the final scene rewarding Antonio and forcibly converting Shylock — reward and punishment wildly unequal.	Treating Portia as either a straightforward winner or a straightforward patriarchal instrument.
B3 the chain of sacrifice	The dream dinner where women from different centuries trade stories of what was taken from them; Marlene's promotion against Joyce's years of raising Angie alone; Angie's dullness as a structural consequence.	Reading only feminist triumph and ignoring class and generational cost.
B4 three-part structure	Reverse chronology (1980s before 1970s) puts effect before cause; the dinner party breaks realist rules so the whole play becomes a debate about history.	Summarising each act without explaining why the order matters.
C2 the cost of freedom	'Parson's Pleasure': freedom as the freedom to plunder (Boggis's 'freedom' depends on the family's ignorance). 'The Story of an Hour': freedom as bodily and spiritual release, mislabelled by society as 'joy that kills'.	Writing one paragraph on each story with no shared axis.

Paper 2 Appreciation samples (2 hours)

Section	Weight	Sample question	How to answer
A passage analysis (choose 1 of 4)	10% of the subject mark	Read the passage from <i>The Merchant of Venice</i> (Act 4, Scene 1) beginning 'The quality of mercy is not strained'. Examine how Shakespeare uses language and dramatic situation to make the audience question whether mercy is possible in Venice.	Answer in two or three parts; handle language (biblical register, rhetorical questions) first, then the dramatic situation (the court, public power), then reach a judgement.
B set-poem comparison (choose 1 of 2)	12% of the subject mark	Compare how two set poems you have studied present inner states that cannot be spoken directly. (For example Dickinson's 'There's a certain Slant of light' and Hughes's 'Thrushes'.)	Sustain a comparative axis; poetry analysis must discuss voice, rhythm and imagery, not paraphrase content.
C unseen poem (one question)	8% of the subject mark	Answer the question on the unseen poem printed in the question paper.	Read three times: once for feeling, once to mark images, once to find the turn. Time is short — leave about 25 minutes for Section C.

Why this page prints no set poems or novel passages

The set poems (Hughes, Duffy and others) and the passages are still in copyright, so reproducing them here would be infringement. In the examination the poem or passage is printed in the question paper; the skill being tested is analysing unfamiliar text, not reciting it. Every question on this page is original and none of it is taken from HKEAA past papers.

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A three-month revision timetable

Phase	Focus	Weekly output
Weeks 1–3: close reading	Three-line summaries and two thematic markers per chapter or scene of every set text	Notes on two chapters plus one thematic comparison table
Weeks 4–5: quotation bank	Ten short, usable quotations per text, with page references	Two finished quotation banks
Weeks 6–8: timed writing	One 50-minute essay a week, handwritten and timed	One essay plus a completed self-marking grid
Weeks 9–10: full papers	Three questions in three hours, then mark each against the grid	Two complete papers
Weeks 11–12: repair	Rewrite your best essay and your weakest one, improving the comparative axis and the quotations	Two rewrites plus one error list

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Frequently asked questions

Q1: How many questions are on the 2027 Paper 1, and how many must I answer?

The paper is printed in three sections — A, B and C — each offering a choice (two novels with two questions each, two plays with two questions each, and comparison questions on the short stories). Candidates answer one question per section: three essays in three hours.

Q2: Is this mock paper a past HKEAA paper?

No. Every question here was written by the TutorZone teaching team to match the 2027 framework's question types, set texts and assessment focus. No HKEAA question text is reproduced. For official past papers, always use the HKEAA website.

Q3: How long should each Paper 1 answer be?

There is no prescribed word count. With three hours for three essays, 500–700 words per answer (about 50 minutes each) is a safe target. Precision beats padding: never recycle plot simply to fill space.

Q4: How should I choose my Section C short stories?

Pick the two you remember in the most detail and hold them to a single comparative axis (irony, freedom, family, the treatment of death). Establish the similarities first, then the differences, and finish by judging which writer handles the theme more effectively — and why.

Q5: Do I need to memorise quotations?

Yes, but not long passages. Three to five short, precise quotations per question are enough to carry an argument; a misquotation costs more than no quotation.

Q6: How much is the SBA worth, and do private candidates do it?

The SBA is 20% of the subject and, from 2026, centres on film (an analytical study of about 2,000–2,500 words). Private candidates do not complete the SBA; their subject result comes entirely from the public examination.

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Further resources and next steps

- **Official resources** — the HKEAA Literature in English assessment framework and List of Set Texts (hkeaa.edu.hk). Set texts change year by year: from 2028 the novels become *Wuthering Heights* and *The Road*, so always check the framework for your own examination year.

- **Related reading** — work through TutorZone's [Subject Guide](#) articles first so that you understand what each course assesses before you start writing timed essays, and see our [Route Guides](#) if you need a tutor near you.
- **For parents** — literature rewards a long reading habit, not last-minute memorising. Discussing one character's decision a week builds argument skills faster than ten extra papers.

Note: the information above is for reference only; examination arrangements follow HKEAA's official announcements. The questions and model answers in this paper were written and subject-checked by the TutorZone teaching team, with AI assistance in drafting.

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Next step: find a tutor, or become one

For parents and students: would you like someone to mark your essays question by question and score Section A to C against the descriptors? Post a free tuition case (subject, level, preferred time) and TutorZone will match you with a Literature in English tutor:

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