ENGLISH CULTURE AND LITERATURE (604-103-MQ)

Competency-Aligned Examination Question Bank

The Neighbourhood Voices Project Edition

Level IV English as a Second Language | Competency 4SA3

Treat in English literary works and subjects of social or cultural scope

Contents of this bank

463 scored questions and prompts, 1531 marks in total, in twelve sections (A to L).

5 original independent reading passages, 4 original short texts, 5 listening activities with YouTube links and reference scripts, 15 essay prompts, and 8 oral prompts.

Answer keys, a marking guide, and rubrics (Appendices B and C). Instructor use only: keep Appendices B and C separate from student copies.

Fall 2026| All texts are original and written for this bank.

Aligned with the New Ministère de l'Enseignement supérieur Framework-Québec (Devis ministériel)

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Part 1: Design Rationale and Test Specifications

1.1 Purpose of the Bank

This bank provides 463 scored questions and prompts, worth 1531 marks in total, for English Culture and Literature (604-103-MQ), a Level IV English as a Second Language course in the Quebec college network. It is aligned with Competency 4SA3, Treat in English literary works and subjects of social or cultural scope, and with the three-stage structure of the Course Outline (Foundations, Application, Independence). Every item can be traced to a learning outcome in the Course Outline, a unit in the Instructor's Handbook, and one of the six graded tasks: Play Video Response (5%), Close Reading Exam (5%), Midterm Writing (20%), Midterm Speaking (20%), Final Writing (25%), and Final Speaking (25%).

The bank is an item bank, not a single exam. Instructors select items according to the blueprint in Section 1.4 to build parallel forms, quizzes, and rehearsal tasks. All reading passages, scripts, and model responses were written for this bank, so there are no copyright restrictions on their use in class.

1.2 Alignment with the New Ministerial Competencies

The bank follows the approach promoted by the Ensemble pour la réussite (ECQ) Resource Hub for the new ALS and FLS competencies: backward design, an action-oriented approach (approche actionnelle), assessment of performance criteria rather than isolated knowledge, and experiential reinvestment of learning in new situations. Instructors should check the wording of the competency elements and performance criteria on the Hub (Comprendre section) when they record results. The table shows how the main design decisions respond to the reform.

Reform principle	How it appears in this bank
Action-oriented approach: learners act as social agents who complete real tasks in English.	Constructed responses, essay prompts, and oral prompts ask students to do something with a text (argue, compare, present, respond to a question), not only to recall facts. Reading and listening items lead to a reuse task.
Backward design and alignment.	Each section starts from the competency outcome it supports (shown at the top of each section) and from the graded task it prepares (blueprint in 1.4).
Reinvestment of learning in new contexts.	Anchor texts studied in class (Achebe, Frost, Glaspell, Adichie) are paired with new, original passages so that students apply the same skills to unfamiliar texts.
Mediation and interaction.	Oral prompts include explaining a text to a listener and answering follow-up questions (Sections G and L). Listening tasks ask students to summarize and restate information for a peer.

Reform principle	How it appears in this bank
Performance criteria and holistic judgment.	Marking guides use observable criteria (observation, evidence, explanation) and the 80/20 split between Literary Analysis and Communication and Language set in the Course Outline.
Quebec context and inclusion.	Passages are set in Quebec and Canadian communities (Verdun, Saguenay, Montreal, a Cree territory scene, a mosque and a church hall) and draw on newcomer, francophone, anglophone, and Indigenous perspectives without stereotyping any group.

1.3 Guiding Principles

- **Competency-based:** items assess what students can do with a literary text (read closely, interpret, argue, speak), not only what they know about it.
- **Constructive alignment:** outcomes (Course Outline, Section 5), learning activities (Instructor's Handbook), and assessment tasks use the same verbs: identify, describe, explain, interpret, evaluate.
- **Cognitive rigour:** the distribution in 1.5 shows the proportion of items at each level and is recalculated for every exam form.
- **Linguistic fairness:** passages and stems are written in plain English at Level IV. Literary terms taught in the course are used freely; other low-frequency words are glossed or avoided.
- **Cultural responsiveness:** texts avoid stereotypes, avoid exotic treatment of non-Western traditions, and do not assume knowledge that newcomers may lack. Where a cultural detail matters, the passage explains it.
- **Accessibility (UDL):** instructions are explicit, every listening activity has a script, oral tasks have alternative formats, and extended time is built into the administration guidelines.

1.4 Test Blueprint

The table shows the number of questions and marks in each section, the learning outcome it supports, and the graded task for which it is best suited.

Sec.	Section	Items	Marks	Outcome supported	Best used for
A	Literary terminology and genre	45	55	Identify literary elements and techniques	Close Reading Exam; quizzes
B	Close reading and textual analysis	50	130	Perform close readings; integrate evidence	Close Reading Exam (5%)
C	Grammar and language for analysis	80	108	Language criteria (20% of every task)	Midterm Writing; Final Writing

Sec.	Section	Items	Marks	Outcome supported	Best used for
D	Context, culture, authorial purpose	35	115	Connect works to historical, cultural, and social contexts	Play Video Response; Final Writing
E	Literary argument and essay structure	40	140	Formulate a thesis; organize an argument	Midterm Writing (20%)
F	Drama and performance	30	64	Analyse dramatic texts and performance	Play Video Response (5%); Midterm Speaking
G	Oral literary analysis	25	85	Present, signpost, self-correct, respond to questions	Midterm Speaking (20%); Final Speaking
H	Listening comprehension	25	55	Understand spoken literary commentary	Formative; Midterm Speaking preparation
I	Independent reading texts	70	140	Read and interpret complex texts	Midterm Writing; Final Writing
J	Short reading texts	40	64	Read, interpret, and analyse short texts	Close Reading Exam; Midterm Writing
K	Essay prompts	15	375	Construct a coherent literary argument (400 to 1000 words)	Close Reading; Midterm Writing; Final Writing (25%)
L	Oral assessment prompts	8	200	Express and defend interpretations orally	Midterm Speaking (20%); Final Speaking (25%)
	Total	**463**	**1531**		

1.5 Cognitive Distribution Matrix

Each item is tagged at one of three cognitive levels, adapted from Bloom's Revised Taxonomy and Webb's Depth of Knowledge: Level 1 (Identify and Describe), Level 2 (Explain, Apply, and Interpret), and Level 3 (Evaluate and Create). The table counts all items in the bank. When you build an exam form, aim for no more than 30% at Level 1, at least 50% at Level 2, and at least 20% at Level 3, and recalculate for your selection.

Section	Level 1: Identify, Describe	Level 2: Explain, Interpret	Level 3: Evaluate	Total
A	35	10	0	45
B	0	50	0	50
C	26	47	7	80
D	12	23	0	35

Section	Level 1: Identify, Describe	Level 2: Explain, Interpret	Level 3: Evaluate	Total
E	0	10	30	40
F	12	8	10	30
G	10	7	8	25
H	15	5	5	25
I	0	65	5	70
J	8	24	8	40
K	0	0	15	15
L	0	0	8	8
Total	**118**	**249**	**96**	**463**
Share	**25.5%**	**53.8%**	**20.7%**	**100%**

1.6 Administration Guidelines

Component	Suggested time	Notes
Close Reading Exam (5%)	60 minutes	One passage from B1 or J, selected items from A, B, C; one K1 to K4 paragraph.
Midterm Writing (20%)	90 minutes	One K5 to K9 essay prompt (500 to 600 words) and a short section from C, E, or J.
Midterm Speaking (20%)	10 minutes per student plus 15 minutes of preparation	One prompt from L1 to L4; F and G items for rehearsal.
Final Writing (25%)	120 minutes	One K10 to K15 prompt (800 to 1000 words); I and D3 items for warm-up.
Final Speaking (25%)	12 minutes per student	One prompt from L5 to L8 with a follow-up question period.
Play Video Response (5%)	30 minutes	F2 items and one short written or recorded response about Trifles.

- **Accommodations:** allow extended time (usually one third more), a separate quiet setting, and a bilingual or monolingual dictionary only if the instructor's policy for the task allows it. Provide large-print or electronic copies on request.
- **Listening:** play each reference script twice at a natural pace, or give the script to students with hearing impairments. Items are keyed to the script, so the activity works even if a video is unavailable.
- **Oral tasks:** offer a live, recorded, or written-with-follow-up format where an accommodation applies.

- **Academic integrity:** use two parallel forms by alternating passages (for example, B1 passage with J2), and keep the Appendix B keys and Appendix C rubrics separate from student copies.
- **Item codes:** every item has a code (for example, C3.4 or I2.9) in the keys so that results can be tracked by skill.

1.7 Source and Verification Notes

All reading passages, poems, dialogues, scripts, quotations used in Subsection B3, and model responses were written for this bank. References to Achebe, Frost, Glaspell, and Adichie are paraphrased and no passages from those works are quoted, so the bank can be photocopied and shared freely within the institution.

Link verification (please read)

Check that the video is still available, is under ten minutes, and has captions.

The Trifles link appears with two spellings of the video code in your files (the handbook ends in "RuJ_M", the prompt ends in "RuI_M"). The handbook version is used in Section H; try the other one if it fails.

Because videos can change, each activity also includes an original reference script (Appendix A) that covers the same teaching points. The scored questions are keyed to that script.