CAPITOLO

14

Old Myths, New Voices: the Classics Today, and the Exam

Every age opens Homer and finds someone in him who has been waiting to speak. — The editors

OBIETTIVI

1. I can describe the place of English in today's world, in Europe and among the other languages of the UK, using sourced figures.
2. I can explain retelling and intertextuality and present the classical retellings of Walcott, Heaney, Atwood, Barker, Miller and Oswald.
3. I can read Antigone's speech on the unwritten laws beside Heaney's version, and the women of Homer beside their modern retellings.
4. I can review the grammar of English 3–5 and solve key-word transformations, word-formation and open cloze tasks.
5. I can complete INVALSI-style reading and listening tasks, build a colloquio from a starting material and write an extended answer.
6. I can compare the English retellings with Pavese's *Dialoghi con Leucò* and present my CLIL module.

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In the spring of 2004 the Abbey Theatre in Dublin, founded by W. B. Yeats and Lady Gregory a hundred years before (chapter 8), celebrated its centenary with a play first performed in Athens in the fifth century BC. The play was Sophocles' *Antigone*; the English words were Seamus Heaney's. A young woman buries her brother against the order of a king, and defends herself with eight lines about laws that are older than any ruler. Twenty-four centuries after Sophocles, a poet from Northern Ireland heard in those lines a question about his own time.

This last chapter of the book looks at the classics in contemporary writing in English — Homer and Sophocles retold in the Caribbean, in Ireland and in the voices of the women the old poems left silent — and at the place of English in today's world. It is also a chapter of review. The Language section draws the map of the year's grammar; the Skills section is a full rehearsal of the reading and listening tasks of the spring and of the *colloquio* of the *esame di maturità*; and the Connections section puts Pavese's gods and heroes beside the Greek lines that you are reading in the original this year.

14.1 History and Society: English in the World Today

The book began in 1837, when an eighteen-year-old queen came to the throne of a country of islands that was becoming the workshop of the world (chapter 1). It ends in a world where the language of those islands is spoken, in one form or another, on every continent. How did that happen, and what does it mean for the other languages of the United Kingdom and of Europe?

14.1.1 A language of the world

Nobody can count the speakers of a language exactly: censuses ask different questions, and the line between "speaking" a language and knowing some of it is not sharp. With that warning, the 2021 edition of the reference work *Ethnologue* estimated that about 370 million people speak English as their first language and nearly a billion more speak it as a second or additional language — roughly 1.35 billion in all. English is not the language with the most native speakers (Mandarin Chinese has far more), but it is the one with by far the most non-native ones: there are between two and three of them for every native speaker.

English is an **official language** (*lingua ufficiale*) — a language that a state uses by law in its parliament, courts, schools or public documents — in more than fifty sovereign states (Figura 14.4). Most of them are former British colonies (chapters 6 and 12), where English stayed after independence as a neutral language between many local ones, as in Nigeria or India. In four countries English has long been the main language in practice without being declared official in law: the United Kingdom, the United States, Australia, and Antigua and Barbuda (in the Uni-

ted States a presidential order of March 2025 designated it the official language, but no federal law does). Beyond the map, English is the usual language of international science, air traffic control, much of the internet and of business between people who share no other language.

The linguist David Crystal has argued that a language does not become global because it is easy or beautiful, but because of the power of the people who speak it: first the political and military power of an empire, then the economic and technological power of the United States in the twentieth century. The history in this book — the empire of chapter 6, the America of chapters 5 and 10, the decolonisation of chapter 12 — is also the history of how English spread.

APPROFONDIMENTO

Who counts? Speaker numbers for English vary widely from source to source, and every one of them is an estimate. Some counts include only fluent speakers; others include anyone who has studied English at school. When you use a number in an essay or in the colloquio, name its source and its year (*according to Ethnologue's 2021 estimate…*) and use approximations (*roughly, about, well over*: chapter 13). A number without a source is an opinion dressed up as a fact.

14.1.2 English in Europe after Brexit

When the United Kingdom left the European Union on 31 January 2020 (chapter 13), some newspapers asked whether English would lose its place there. It did not. English remains one of the twenty-four official languages of the EU — Ireland and Malta, which are still members, both have it as an official language — and it is still the most common working language in Brussels, as well as the foreign language most widely studied in the schools of the Union. Paradoxically, English in Europe is now, more than ever, a language that belongs to no single member state: a tool for Italians, Poles and Finns to talk to each other.

14.1.3 The other languages of the United Kingdom

English is not the only language of the British Isles, and the Celtic languages are older there than English itself (English 3, chapter 2). In **Wales**, Welsh has been an official language since the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure of 2011; road signs, schools and public services are bilingual. In the 2021 census, 17.8% of people in Wales aged three or over — about 538,000 — said that they could speak Welsh. In **Scotland**, the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act of 2005 recognised **Scottish Gaelic** (*gaelico scozzese*) as an official language of Scotland "commanding equal respect" with English. Scotland's 2022 census found that about 130,000 people, 2.5% of the population aged three or over, had some Gaelic skills, up from 1.7% in 2011; in the Western Isles (Na h-Eileanan Siar) the figure was 57.2%. In **Northern Ireland**, the Identity and Language (Northern Ireland) Act of 2022 gave official recognition to Irish, whose revival you met in chapter 8. Scots, Ulster Scots and Cornish are also recognised as regional or **minority languages** (*lingue minori-*

tarie): languages spoken by a smaller community inside a state whose main language is another.

Italy knows the question well: its Constitution (art. 6) protects linguistic minorities, and in some regions German, French, Slovene, Sardinian or Friulian are used in schools and public life beside Italian. A global language and a local one are not necessarily enemies; most of the world's people live with more than one.

ERRORE FREQUENTE

✗ «L'inglese è la lingua con più madrelingua al mondo.» → ✓ No: il cinese mandarino ha molti più parlanti nativi. L'inglese è la lingua con più parlanti **non nativi**, ed è per questo che è una lingua globale.

✗ «Dopo la Brexit l'inglese non è più una lingua ufficiale dell'Unione Europea.» → ✓ È ancora una delle ventiquattro lingue ufficiali (l'Irlanda e Malta la usano come lingua ufficiale) e resta la lingua di lavoro più usata.

✗ «In Galles e in Scozia si parla solo inglese.» → ✓ Il gallese è lingua ufficiale in Galles (2011); il gaelico scozzese è riconosciuto come lingua ufficiale della Scozia (2005).

14.1.4 The year in one line

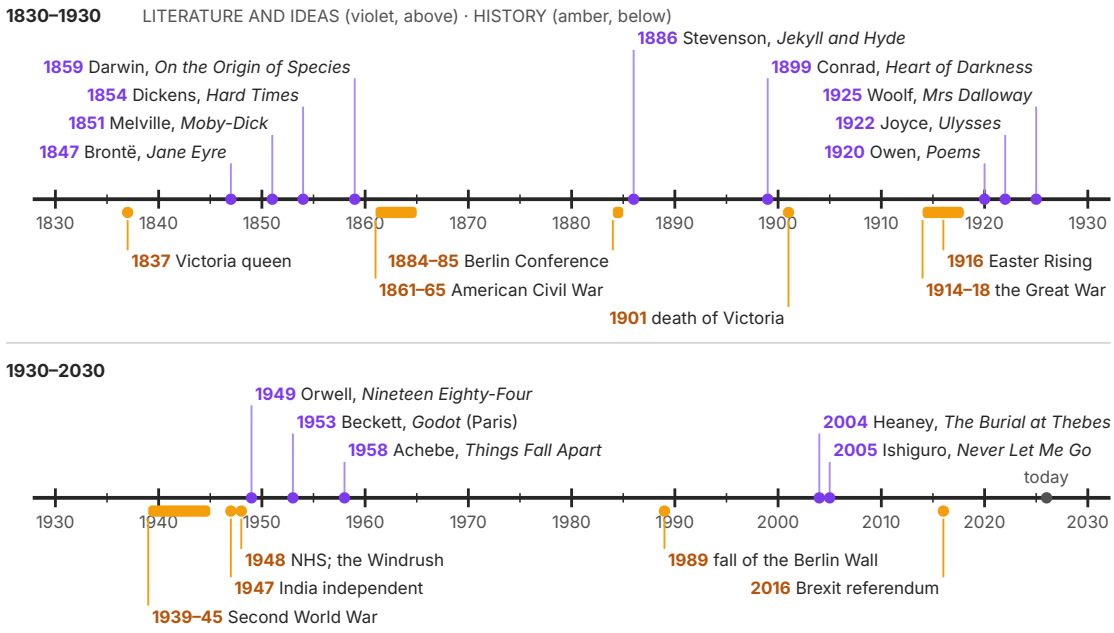


Figura 14.1 English 5 in one timeline, 1837 to today, in two strips at the same scale: a key work for each chapter (above the axis, violet; the First World War of chapter 7 is represented by Owen's *Poems*, 1920) and the historical events that frame them (below, amber). Dates are of first publication or performance; *Waiting for Godot* was first staged in French.

Figura 14.1 puts the whole volume on one line. Read it from left to right and the book's story appears: a Victorian Britain sure of its progress and troubled by its poverty and its doubts; the American Renaissance and the Civil War; the empire at its height; the First World War and a new Ireland; the Modernist revolution of 1922 and 1925; the dictators, the Second World War and Orwell's warning; the end of empire and the arrival of the Windrush generation; and the fiction of our own century, which asks what memory, science and machines do to human beings. For the colloquio, the timeline is a tool: every material you are given belongs somewhere on it, and placing it there is the first step towards linking it to other subjects.

14.1.5 The exam, in general terms

The five years of the liceo end with the state exam that a law of 2025 (D.L. 127/2025, converted by L. 164/2025) has once again called the *esame di maturità*, its former name. Its rules are set by law and by a yearly ministerial order, so they can change from one year to the next; in general terms, it consists of written tests and an oral *colloquio* in which the candidate discusses a material and links subjects. At the liceo classico English is not one of the written tests, but it may be

examined in the colloquio, and the colloquio may also ask you to present your CLIL work (Connections below). In the spring of the fifth year, students also take the national INVALSI tests, which for English assess reading and listening on a computer and report the results by the levels of the Common European Framework (B1 and B2). Check the rules of your own year with your teachers: this book describes the exam only in outline, on purpose.

14.2 Literature: Old Myths, New Voices

Writers in English have never stopped reading the Greeks and the Romans. You have met Tennyson's old Ulysses (chapter 2), Wilde's Narcissus (chapter 4), Owen's quarrel with Horace (chapter 7) and Joyce's Dublin Odyssey (chapter 8). In the last forty years, however, something new has happened: some of the most widely read books in English are retellings of Homer and of Greek tragedy, and many of them are told by a character who, in the original, hardly speaks.

14.2.1 Retelling and intertextuality

A **retelling** (*riscrittura*) is a new work that tells again a story the reader may already know — a myth, an epic, a tragedy — changing its setting, its point of view, its form or its emphasis. A retelling does not hide its source: it needs the reader to remember the old story, because its meaning lies in the difference. When Atwood lets Penelope speak, the reader hears both her voice and the silence she had in Homer.

Retellings are a clear case of **intertextuality** (*intertestualità*), a term introduced by the critic Julia Kristeva in the late 1960s: the idea that every text is made out of other texts, which it quotes, echoes, answers or transforms, so that its meaning depends on its relations with them. Intertextuality can be a single quotation (Achebe's title from Yeats, chapter 12), an allusion, a parody, or a whole structure, like Joyce's *mythical method* (chapter 8). A retelling is intertextuality made visible.

Some retellings are also translations of a special kind. Heaney called his *Antigone* "a version": a **version** (*versione libera, rifacimento*) is a translation that keeps the structure and the meaning of its original but rewrites its language freely, as a new work in the translator's own voice. The word has nothing to do with the *versione* you write in class, which must be faithful to the Greek or the Latin line by line.

DA RICORDARE

retelling — a new work that tells an old story again, from a new point of view or in a new world. **intertextuality** — the relations that link every text to other texts. **version** — a free translation that is also a new work. A retelling is always intertextual; an intertextual text is not always a retelling.

14.2.2 Derek Walcott: Homer in the Caribbean

Derek Walcott (1930–2017) was born in Castries, on the island of St Lucia, then a British colony. His long poem *Omeros* (1990) — the title is the Greek name of Homer — moves the Homeric world to the fishing villages of St Lucia. Two fishermen, Achille and Hector, are rivals for a beautiful woman, Helen; another, Philoctete, suffers from a wound that will not heal. Around them the poem travels to Africa, to North America and to Europe, and the poet himself appears as a character. It is written in long lines arranged in groups of three, a free version of Dante's terza rima (English 4). Walcott's point is not that a St Lucian fisherman is "like" a Greek hero, but that ordinary Caribbean lives, marked by slavery and empire, deserve epic; the classics are not the property of Europe. Walcott received the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1992. (His works are not in the public domain, so the book summarises them.)

14.2.3 Seamus Heaney: Sophocles in Ireland

Seamus Heaney (1939–2013) grew up on a farm in County Derry, in Northern Ireland, and received the Nobel Prize in 1995. Two of his works for the theatre are versions of Sophocles. *The Cure at Troy* (1990), after the *Philoctetes*, was first staged by the Field Day Theatre Company in Derry during the Troubles: the story of a wounded man abandoned by his comrades, whom they now need, became a play about injury, resentment and the possibility of healing in a divided society. *The Burial at Thebes* (2004), after *Antigone*, was written for the Abbey Theatre's centenary (T1). Heaney also translated the Old English *Beowulf* (1999; English 3), which won the Whitbread Book of the Year award: for him, translating the oldest poems in the language and the oldest tragedies of Europe was one activity, a way of making the past speak to the present.

14.2.4 Women's voices: Atwood, Barker, Miller and Oswald

The most striking development of recent years is the retelling from the side of the silent. As early as 1982 the American poet and critic Alicia Ostriker described what she called **revisionist mythmaking** (*riscrittura revisionista del mito*): women poets taking the old myths and retelling them so as to question the values they carry. Four books show where this has led.

- Margaret Atwood, *The Penelopiad* (2005), written for a series of short retellings of myths: Penelope tells her own story from the underworld, in a modern, ironic voice, and the twelve maids whom Odysseus hangs at the end of the *Odyssey* answer her as a chorus (T2).
- Pat Barker, *The Silence of the Girls* (2018): the *Iliad* told largely by Briseis, the captive woman whom Agamemnon takes from Achilles in Book I. The war looks very different from the women's huts of the Greek camp. A sequel, *The Women of Troy*, followed in 2021.
- Madeline Miller, *Circe* (2018): the goddess whom the *Odyssey* shows as a dangerous enchantress tells her whole long life, of which Odysseus' visit is only one episode. Miller's first novel, *The Song of Achilles* (2011), had told the *Iliad* through Patroclus.

- Alice Oswald, *Memorial* (2011): a poem that takes the *Iliad* and keeps only two of its elements — the brief lives and deaths of the soldiers, named one after another, and the similes. The story of Achilles disappears; what remains is a war memorial in words (chapter 7).

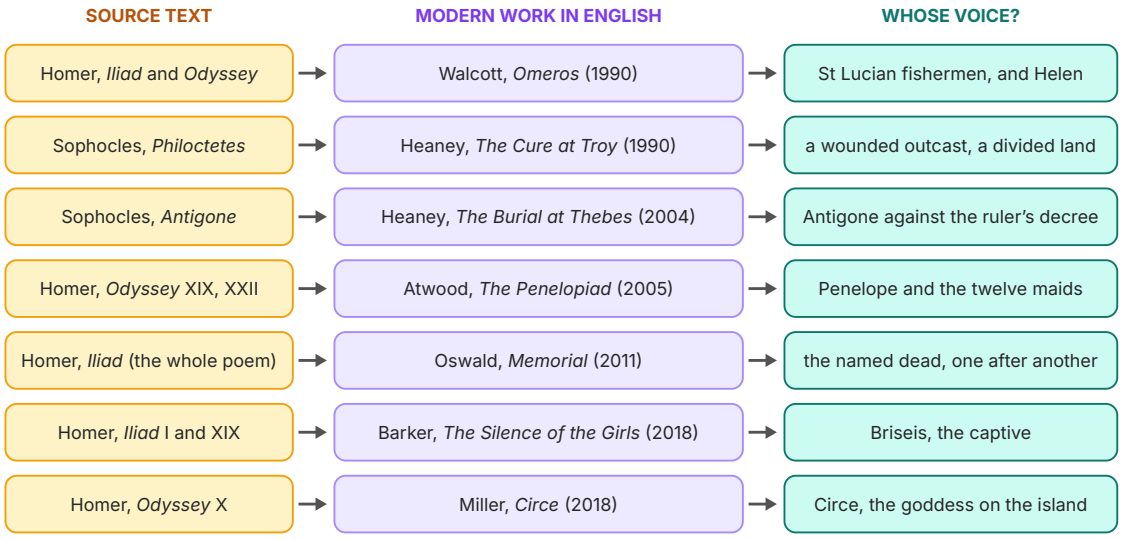


Figura 14.2 From myth to retelling: the ancient source, the modern work in English and the voice it restores or brings to the centre. All the modern works are summarised in this book, not quoted (they are not in the public domain).

Figura 14.2 sets the main retellings side by side. Notice what the third column shows: in almost every case the modern work moves the centre of the story — from the hero to the captive, from the king to the girl who defies him, from the victor to the dead. Behind this is the experience of the whole century you have studied: wars told by those who suffered them (chapter 7), empires seen from the colonised (chapters 6 and 12), novels in which women claim their own voice (chapters 3 and 9).

ERRORE FREQUENTE

✗ «*The Silence of the Girls* è una traduzione dell'*Iliade*.» → ✓ È una **riscrittura**: un romanzo nuovo che racconta la stessa guerra dal punto di vista di Briseide. Una **traduzione** riproduce il testo; una **riscrittura** lo reinventa.

✗ «Nell'*Odissea* Penelope non parla mai.» → ✓ Penelope parla, e molto; ma Omero la mostra soprattutto attraverso gli occhi degli uomini, e Telemaco la rimanda nelle sue stanze (Connections). Le riscritture moderne ne fanno la **narratrice**.

14.2.5 The year's themes as paths

A **thematic path** (*percorso*) is a route through the programme that follows one theme across authors, periods and subjects. Preparing four or five paths is the most useful revision you can do for the colloquio, because it turns a list of authors into a set of connections. Tabella 14.1 suggests seven, built from this book; yours may be different.

Tabella 14.1 Seven thematic paths through *English 5*, with a classical and an Italian link for each.

Path	English authors (chapter)	Classical link	Italian link
the double	Stevenson, Wilde (4); Woolf (9)	Ovid's Narcissus	D'Annunzio, Pirandello
the city	Dickens (1); Joyce (8); Woolf (9)	Petronius' Cena	Verga, Svevo
war	Owen, Brooke, Rosenberg (7); Orwell (10)	Tyrtaeus, Horace; Thucydides	Ungaretti, D'Annunzio
women's voices	the Brontës, Eliot (3); Woolf (9); Atwood, Barker (14)	Medea; Antigone; Penelope	Deledda, Aleramo
empire and its aftermath	Kipling, Conrad (6); Tagore, Achebe (12)	Tacitus' Calgacus; Herodotus	Pascoli, De Amicis
time and memory	Joyce (8); Woolf (9); Ishiguro (13)	the Sibyl; Homer's automata	Pirandello, Calvino
the classical heritage	Tennyson (2); Joyce (8); Walcott, Heaney, Miller (14)	Homer, Sophocles	Dante, Pascoli, Pavese

14.3 Texts: Antigone, Penelope and a Starting Material

The texts of this last chapter are of three kinds. The first two are reading guides to works that are not in the public domain, each with the ancient passage it rewrites; the third is not a literary text at all but a sheet of the kind a commission might give you at the start of the colloquio, with the steps for building your answer.

14.3.1 T1 · Reading guide · Seamus Heaney, *The Burial at Thebes* (2004), and Sophocles, *Antigone* 450–457

Context. After the death of Oedipus, his two sons, Eteocles and Polynices, fight for the throne of Thebes and kill each other. Their uncle Creon, the new king, decrees that Eteocles shall be buried with honour and Polynices, who attacked the city with a foreign army, left unburied for the dogs and birds. Their sister Antigone covers Polynices' body with dust. She is caught and brought before Creon.

Tabella 14.2 T1 — Sophocles, *Antigone* 450–457: Antigone answers Creon. Greek text of F. Storr's edition (Loeb, 1912) in the Perseus Digital Library, checked against the transcription on Wikisource greca; transliteration and translation by the editors.

Greek	English (translation by the editors)
οὐ γάρ τί μοι Ζεὺς ἦν ὁ κηρύξας τάδε, οὐδ' ἡ ξύνοικος τῶν κάτω θεῶν Δίκη τοιούσδ' ἐν ἀνθρώποισιν ὥρισεν νόμους· οὐδὲ σθένειν τοσοῦτον ᾠόμην τὰ σὰ κηρύγματ', ὥστ' ἄγραπτα κἀσφαλῆ θεῶν νόμιμα δύνασθαι θνητὸν ὄντ' ὑπερδραμεῖν. οὐ γάρ τι νῦν γε κἀχθές, ἀλλ' ἀεί ποτε ζῇ ταῦτα, κοὐδεὶς οἶδεν ἐξ ὅτου 'φάνη. (*ou gar ti moi Zeus ēn ho kēryxas tade, / oud' hē xynoikos tōn katō theōn Dikē / toiousd' en anthrōpoisin hōrisen nomous. / oude sthenein tosouton ōiomēn ta sa / kērygmath', hōst' agrapta kasphalē theōn / nomima dynasthai thnēton onth' hyperdramein. / ou gar ti nyn ge kachthes, all' aei pote / zēi tauta, koudeis oiden ex hotou 'phanē*)	"It was not Zeus who made this proclamation to me, nor did Justice, who lives with the gods below, lay down such laws for human beings. Nor did I think that your proclamations had such power that you, a mortal, could overrule the unwritten and unshakeable laws of the gods. For they are alive not now or yesterday, but always, and no one knows when they first appeared."

Glosses. *proclamation* a public order announced by a ruler (Greek *kērygma*) · *Justice* Dikē, here a goddess who lives with the gods of the underworld, who care for the dead · *overrule* set aside, have more power than · *unshakeable* firm, that cannot fall (Greek *asphalē*).

The scene in Heaney's version. Creon asks her whether she knew of his order, and she says that she did. Why, then, did she break the law? Antigone answers that his proclamation was not made by the gods, and that no human order can overrule the laws of the gods, which are not written down and have no beginning. She knows that she will be put to death, and says that she would rather die than leave her brother unburied; to die before her time is, for her, a gain. Creon hears in her words the pride of a rebel and, worse, of a woman who defies a man; he swears that she will not rule over him while he lives. Heaney keeps the order and the meaning of Sophocles' scene but writes in a plain, direct English that a Dublin audience of 2004 could hear without footnotes. He said later that he had heard in Creon's either-with-me-or-against-me demands an echo of the political language of the time, when the United States was preparing to invade Iraq in 2003.

Analysis

Two kinds of law. The speech sets the **unwritten laws** (*leggi non scritte*, Greek *agrapta nomima*) of the gods — here, the duty to bury the dead — against the written, dated order of a man. The contrast is built into the grammar: Creon's laws have an author (*ho kēryxas*, "the one who proclaimed") and a date; the gods' laws have neither, and no one knows *ex hotou 'phanē*, "from when they appeared".

The rhetoric of refusal. Antigone begins with two negatives (*ou… oud'…*), as if clearing away Creon's claims before stating her own; the last two lines move from *not now or yesterday* to *always* (*aei pote*), from time to eternity. Note the contemptuous *thnēton onth'*, "being a mortal": she reminds the king of what he is.

Why it is retold. The conflict between conscience and the law of the state has been read in every age: Hegel saw in it the clash of two rights, the family's and the city's (a link with Filosofia); in the twentieth century it was staged against dictatorships and occupations. Heaney's version shows that the scene can still speak to a modern democracy, where a leader may also ask citizens to choose between loyalty and conscience.

1. What has Antigone done, and why does Creon consider it a crime?
2. Which two divine figures does she name, and why do you think she names Justice "who lives with the gods below"?
3. Find the words that express time in the last two lines. How do they support her argument?
4. Heaney made Creon's demands sound like the political language of 2003. Is this a betrayal of Sophocles or a way of being faithful to him? Give one reason.
5. **Colloquio link.** Which other text of this year sets an individual against the power of the state? (Think of chapter 10.)

14.3.2 T2 · Reading guide · Margaret Atwood, *The Penelopiad* (2005)

Context. In the *Odyssey* Penelope waits twenty years for Odysseus, keeping more than a hundred suitors at bay with tricks — the most famous is the shroud for her father-in-law Laertes, which she weaves by day and unpicks by night. When Odysseus comes home and kills the suitors, he orders that the maids who slept with them be put to death, and Telemachus hangs twelve of them (Book XXII). Homer gives the episode a few lines. Atwood's short novel was written for a series in which contemporary writers retell ancient myths.

The story. Penelope narrates from the underworld, where she has had a very long time to think. Her tone is not epic but conversational, dry and often funny: she talks about her childhood in Sparta, her marriage, her cousin Helen, whose beauty she has always resented, and her life in a house full of men who speak about her but not to her. She admits that she knew far more than she let her husband see, and she tells us her side of the story of the maids: they were her helpers and her spies among the suitors, acting on her instructions. Between her chapters, the twelve hanged maids speak as a *chorus* (English 3), in a variety of forms — a children's rhyme, a song, a ballad, a mock lecture, a mock trial in which they accuse Odysseus. In the last pages they promise to follow him wherever he goes, so that he can never rest.

What the retelling restores. Homer's Penelope is praised as the perfect faithful wife; Atwood's is intelligent, ironic and not entirely innocent. The maids, who in Homer have no names and no words, take over the book's most powerful pages. The question the novel asks is the one this chapter asks of every retelling: whose story is the epic, and who paid for it?

Analysis

1. Who narrates the novel, from where, and in what tone? How is this different from the epic voice of Homer?
2. Why are the maids presented as a chorus? What does the word suggest to a reader of Greek tragedy?
3. The maids speak in many different forms (rhyme, song, lecture, trial). What is the effect of this variety?
4. Atwood's Penelope is not entirely innocent. Why might a modern writer prefer a less perfect heroine?
5. Compare Antigone in T1 and the maids in T2: both speak against a man's decision about their bodies or their dead. Which voice is stronger, and why?

14.3.3 T3 · Starting from a material: a colloquio sheet

In the colloquio the conversation often begins from a **starting material** (*materiale di partenza*): a short text, an image, a quotation, a document or a problem, chosen by the commission, from which the candidate builds links between subjects. Here is a sheet of the kind you might receive, with three elements.

Tabella 14.3 T3 — A starting material (an example prepared by the editors). Tennyson's lines are from the text of the Project Gutenberg eBook #8601; Dante's from the text transcribed on it.wikisource.org.

A · Text. "Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will / To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield." — Alfred Tennyson, "Ulysses" (1842), ll. 69–70
B · Image (described). A photograph taken by a space probe from about six billion kilometres away: a wide, dark field crossed by bands of scattered sunlight. In one of the bands, a single bright dot, smaller than a pixel. The dot is the Earth.
C · Quotation. "fatti non foste a viver come bruti, / ma per seguir virtute e canoscenza" — Dante, *Inferno* XXVI.119–120

Notes. Image B describes a real photograph, the one known as the "Pale Blue Dot", taken by NASA's *Voyager 1* on 14 February 1990, when the probe was about six billion kilometres from the Sun; it is described here, not reproduced. Text A closes Tennyson's poem (chapter 2); Quotation C is Dante's Ulisse speaking to his companions, which you compared with it in chapter 2.

ESEMPIO SVOLTO

Building the colloquio from the material, in five steps (about two minutes of thinking, five of talking).

1. **Find what the three elements share.** All three are about going beyond a limit: an old man who will not stop, a photograph from the edge of the solar system, a hero who tells his men they were made to know. The theme is the journey beyond the known.
2. **Name the theme in one sentence** and say it first: *I would like to start from the idea of the journey as the desire to know, which links the three elements.*
3. **Choose three subjects and one point in each** (not more): Italian — Dante's Ulisse and Pascoli's "L'ultimo viaggio"; Greek — Tiresias' prophecy of Odysseus' last journey in *Odyssey* XI; physics and science — what it means to see the Earth from outside, and the light that takes hours to reach a distant probe.
4. **Come back to English** with an author you know well: Tennyson's "Ulysses" (form: a dramatic monologue in blank verse; the final line as a creed), and if there is time Joyce's *Ulysses*, where the journey shrinks to one day in Dublin.
5. **Prepare for a follow-up question:** *Is Tennyson's Ulysses a hero or a man who abandons his duties?* Have one sentence for each side.

Lesson: the material is a door, not the whole house. Spend a minute on it, then move along a path you have prepared (Figura 14.3), and return to it at the end.

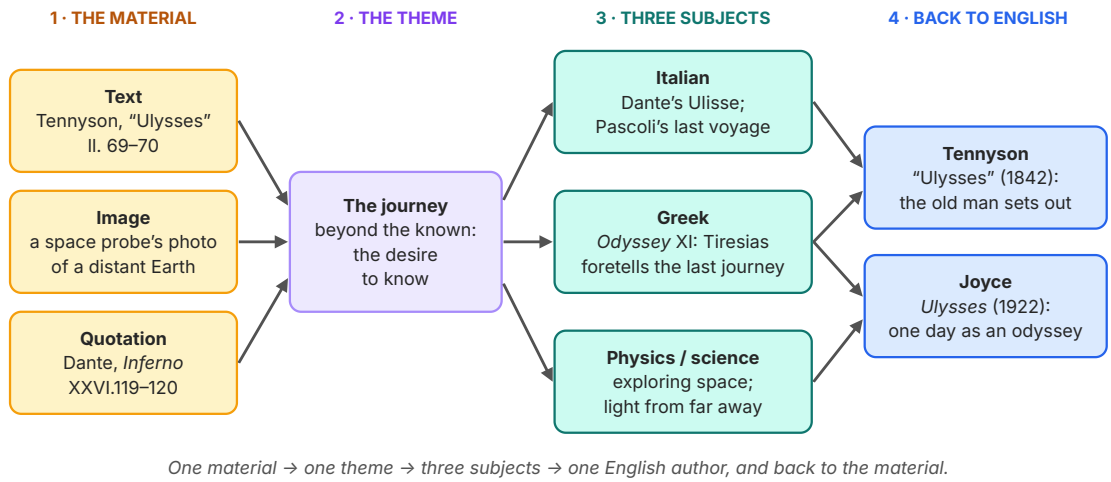


Figura 14.3 A colloquio map built from the material in T3: the material suggests a theme, the theme opens three subjects, and the subjects lead back to an English author you have studied.

Analysis

1. Explain in your own words what the three elements of the material have in common.
2. Tennyson's line 70 is built on four verbs. Which device is it, and why is it a good line to quote in the colloquio?
3. Choose a different theme that the same material could suggest (for example, old age, or the smallness of human beings), and name three subjects you could link to it.
4. Which other author of this book could you reach from Image B? Explain the link in one or two sentences.

14.4 Language: the Year's Grammar in Review

This chapter introduces no new grammar. In the last weeks of the year, revision matters more than novelty: the structures of English 5 are mostly ways of writing and talking *about* texts, history and data, and they rest on the B2 grammar of English 3 and English 4. This section draws the map of both, revises the two exercise types that test them most directly, and lists the task types of reading and listening tests.

14.4.1 A map of English 5

Tabella 14.4 lists the language point of each chapter of this book, with an example drawn from the year's history and literature. Use it as a checklist: if you cannot write a sentence of your own for a row, go back to that chapter.

Tabella 14.4 The language of *English 5*: one point per chapter, with an example and its use in the exam.

Ch.	Point	Example	Where it helps
1	tense choice in writing about literature	*In Hard Times Gradgrind **demands** facts; Dickens **worked** in a factory as a boy.*	essays, colloquio
2	concessive clauses	***Much as** Tennyson admired science, it frightened him.*	argument
3	modal nuances	*It is natural that Jane **should** rebel; she **could hardly** stay silent.*	nuance, stance
4	absolute constructions	***The trial over**, Wilde was sentenced to two years' hard labour.*	concise writing
5	British and American English	*colour / color; I've just read it / I just read it*	consistency
6	reporting and citing sources	*Achebe **argues** that the novel dehumanises Africans.*	essays, CLIL
7	connotation, euphemism, compound adjectives	*the fallen; a **shell-shocked** officer*	text analysis
8	spoken grammar, Hiberno-English	*That Joyce, he never went back.*	listening, speaking
9	represented speech and thought	*What a morning — she would buy the flowers herself.*	text analysis
10	clarity and concision	*✗ due to the fact that → ✓ because*	writing, editing
11	pragmatics	*"It's cold in here." = please close the window*	speaking, listening
12	World Englishes	*inner, outer and expanding circles*	culture, CLIL
13	describing data and trends	*Emissions **rose sharply**, **by** 2%, **to** a peak of…*	CLIL, INVALSI reading

14.4.2 The B2 core of English 3 and English 4

Under the language of this year lies the grammar of the secondo biennio. Tabella 14.5 groups it in six areas; the chapter references take you back to the right page of English 3 (E3) and English 4 (E4).

Tabella 14.5 The B2 grammar of English 3 and English 4, in six areas (E3·8 = English 3, chapter 8).

Area	Structures (where you studied them)
time and narration	narrative tenses (E3·1); future forms B2 (E3·9); *was to*, *be supposed to* (E4·13)
modality	past ability and necessity (E3·2); past modals of deduction and criticism (E3·3); hedging (E4·4)
the verb phrase	passive B2 and the causative (E3·4); gerunds and infinitives (E3·10); verb patterns of permission and prevention (E4·9); phrasal verbs (E4·10)
the complex sentence	relative clauses (E3·5); reported speech and reporting verbs (E3·6); participle clauses (E3·8); conditionals, *wish*, alternatives to *if* (E3·7, E3·13); inverted conditionals (E4·8)
emphasis and formality	inversion (E4·3); nominalisation (E4·5); clefts, fronting, emphatic *do* (E4·6); the subjunctive (E4·7); *-ever* words (E4·11); focus and degree adverbs (E4·12)
the noun phrase and the text	articles and determiners (E4·1, E4·2); comparison (E3·11); cohesion and discourse markers (E3·14)

14.4.3 Key-word transformations and word-formation cloze

Two exercise types, inspired by B2 certifications, test this grammar most directly. In a key-word transformation (English 4, chapter 14) you complete a second sentence with two to five words, including a word given in capitals, so that it means the same as the first. Most transformations across the three volumes test a small set of patterns:

- *I regret not reading it.* → *I wish* ***I had read*** *it.* (WISH; English 3)
- *She didn't understand the poem until she read it aloud.* → ***Not until she read*** *it aloud did she understand the poem.* (UNTIL; English 4)
- *Although he admired Darwin, he was afraid.* → ***Much as he admired*** *Darwin, he was afraid.* (MUCH; this book, chapter 2)
- *There is no point in waiting, so let's start now.* → *We* ***might as well start*** *now.* (MIGHT; chapter 3)
- *People say Joyce wrote standing up.* → *Joyce* ***is said to have written*** *standing up.* (SAID; English 3)

In a **word-formation cloze** (*esercizio di formazione delle parole*) you read a text with gaps and form a word that fits each gap from a word given in capitals. It tests the word families of the language — the noun, the verb, the adjective and the adverb built on one root — and the prefixes and suffixes you have studied since English 1 (in this book: *-hood / -ship / -dom*, chapter 1; *-ism / -ist*, chapter 4; *multi- / inter- / trans-*, chapter 12).

ESEMPIO SVOLTO

Solving a word-formation gap in four steps. *Atwood's maids are among the most* _____ *voices in recent fiction.* (FORGET)

1. **Part of speech.** After *the most* and before a noun (*voices*) we need an adjective.
2. **Meaning.** The sense is positive: the voices stay in the memory. So not *forgettable* but its opposite — we need a negative prefix.
3. **Form.** *forget* → *forgettable* → *unforgettable*: the adjective suffix *-able* doubles the *t*; the prefix *un-* makes it negative.
4. **Check the whole sentence.** *the most unforgettable voices* — grammatical, and it means what the text means.

Lesson: ask three questions for every gap — which part of speech? positive or negative? singular, plural or which tense? Many lost points come from a missing *-s*, *un-* or *-ly*, not from not knowing the word.

GRAMMAR IN ITALIANO

Il ripasso finale. Nell'ultimo mese non serve imparare regole nuove: serve **riconoscere** le strutture e **usarle**. Per ogni riga della Tabella 14.4 scrivete una frase vostra su un autore dell'anno; per le trasformazioni, partite sempre dalla parola chiave e chiedetevi quale struttura richiede (*much* → concessiva, *wish* → desiderio irreale, *until* → inversione).

Confronto con l'italiano. La formazione delle parole funziona come in italiano (*dimenticare* → *indimenticabile*; *forget* → *unforgettable*), e molte radici sono le stesse, latine o greche (capitolo 2). Attenzione però ai falsi amici negli esercizi: *eventually* = alla fine, non «eventualmente»; *actually* = in realtà, non «attualmente»; *sensible* = assennato, non «sensibile».

ERRORE FREQUENTE

✗ *In The Penelopiad Penelope told her story from Hades.* → ✓ *Penelope* ***tells*** *her story…* (presente letterario per ciò che accade nel testo: capitolo 1).

✗ *Much as of his success, Heaney stayed modest.* → ✓ *Much as he* ***enjoyed*** *his success…* (*much as* + frase: capitolo 2).

✗ *Waiting for the verdict, the courtroom was silent.* → ✓ *While the jury was deciding, the courtroom was silent.* (participio «sospeso»: il soggetto non è lo stesso; capitolo 4).

✗ *The number of speakers raised to 1.3 billion.* → ✓ *The number of speakers* ***rose*** *to 1.3 billion.* (*rise* intransitivo, *raise* transitivo: capitolo 13).

14.4.4 Reading and listening tasks in review

The national tests of the spring and the B2 certifications use a small number of task types for reading and listening. You practised them in chapters 8 and 9; Tabella 14.6 sums them up with the strategy that works for each. In **multiple matching** (*abbinamento multiplo*) you match a set of items — questions, headings, sentences or speakers — to the parts of a text; in an **open cloze** (*cloze aperto*) you write one word, usually a grammar word, in each gap of a text, with no options to choose from.

IN SINTESI

Tabella 14.6 Reading and listening task types and the strategy for each (formats inspired by national tests and B2 certifications, not copied from them).

Task type	What you do	Strategy
multiple choice	choose A, B, C or D	read the stem, find the passage, eliminate the distractors one by one
multiple matching	match items to paragraphs, speakers or headings	underline key ideas in the items; expect paraphrase, not the same words
short answers	write a few words (often a maximum of four)	respect the word limit; copy spelling exactly from the text
true / false / not given	decide whether the text says it	"not given" means the text neither confirms nor denies it
gapped text	put removed sentences back in the text	look at pronouns and linkers before and after each gap
open cloze	write one word in each gap	articles, prepositions, auxiliaries, pronouns, linkers

14.5 Skills: the Final Rehearsal

14.5.1 Vocabulary: academic word families

Writing and talking about texts in an exam needs a small set of academic words, and you need all the members of each family: the verb to say what an author does, the noun to name it, the adjective to qualify it. Tabella 14.7 lists ten families. The **academic vocabulary** (*lessico accademico*) of this kind is shared across subjects: the same words serve in an English essay, a CLIL lesson and a history answer.

Tabella 14.7 Academic word families for the exam (stress in bold where it moves).

Verb	Noun	Adjective	Adverb
anal**yse** (AmE *analyze*)	an**al**ysis (pl. *analyses*)	an**al**ytical	an**al**ytically
con**trast**	**con**trast	con**tras**ting	—
in**ter**pret	interpre**ta**tion	in**ter**pretative / in**ter**pretive	—
sig**ni**fy	sig**ni**ficance	sig**ni**ficant	sig**ni**ficantly
—	theme	the**ma**tic	the**ma**tically
com**pare**	com**pa**rison	com**pa**rative / **com**parable	com**pa**ratively
emphasise	**em**phasis (pl. *emphases*)	em**pha**tic	em**pha**tically
symbolise	**sym**bol, **sym**bolism	sym**bo**lic	sym**bo**lically
nar**rate**	nar**ra**tion, nar**ra**tor, **nar**rative	**nar**rative	—
ar**gue**	**ar**gument	**ar**guable, argu**men**tative	**ar**guably

Collocations. Learn the verbs that go with these nouns: *draw a comparison, make a contrast, offer an interpretation, place emphasis on, raise a question, put forward an argument, reach a conclusion.* ✗ *do a comparison* and ✗ *make an analysis of the text* are possible but weak; *carry out an analysis* is the formal choice.

14.5.2 Reading: a full INVALSI-style practice

Before you read. Have you ever seen a place where road signs are in two languages? Which ones? Read Callum's post (B1–B2) in about fifteen minutes; the tasks are in the Towards the Exam exercises at the end of the chapter. Do them under test conditions: no dictionary, and no going back to the questions of the listening.

Tabella 14.8 Reading text — Callum's post on his blog, "Callum's Notebook" (an original text; the census figures are those of Scotland's Census 2022)

Callum's Notebook · The Island Where English Comes Second
Our field trip began at half past five in the morning, in a minibus that smelt of coffee and wet boots. Twelve first-year geography students, two lecturers and a lot of luggage drove across the Highlands to Ullapool, where the ferry leaves for Stornoway, on the Isle of Lewis. The crossing takes under three hours. I spent most of it on deck, half frozen, watching for dolphins. I saw none, but a man from Stornoway told me I had just been unlucky, "which is the normal condition of visitors".
We had come to study peat bogs and coastal erosion. What I had not expected was the language. The road signs on Lewis give the Gaelic name first and the English one underneath, in smaller letters, and some villages are known almost only by their Gaelic names. In the shop the conversation at the till switched from Gaelic to English when I arrived, and back to Gaelic when I left, as naturally as someone changing gear.
Our lecturer, who loves numbers even more than peat, had prepared a handout. In the 2022 census, she told us, 57.2% of the people in the Western Isles said they had some Gaelic skills, against 2.5% in Scotland as a whole. Then she pointed out the less comfortable figure: the share of people there who actually *speak* Gaelic had fallen since 2011, and for the first time speakers were a minority even in the islands. "So which is it," she asked us, "a language in danger, or a language coming back?" Nobody wanted to answer first.
The answer, I think, is both. Across Scotland more people than ever are learning Gaelic, many of them adults with an app, and many children in the cities now go to Gaelic-medium schools, where every subject is taught in Gaelic. But a language does not live in apps or classrooms only. It lives in shops and kitchens and on the radio, among people who have nothing in common except the place where they live. Our guide on the second day, a retired fisherman called Murdo, put it more simply. "My grandchildren learn it at school," he said, "and then they go home and speak English to their phones."
On the last evening we sat in a café overlooking the harbour and tried to read the Gaelic menu without looking at the English translation. I managed *cofaidh*, which is not difficult, and nothing else. It is a strange experience for an English speaker to be the foreigner in his own country. All my life, wherever I have travelled, someone has spoken my language to me, and I have taken it for granted. On Lewis, people were polite enough to switch to English as soon as I opened my mouth — and that, I realised, is exactly how a small language slowly loses its ground: not because anyone forbids it, but because everyone is kind to the visitor.
I came back with forty kilos of peat samples, a cold and a Gaelic dictionary. My flatmate thinks I am mad. Giulia, who is studying for an exam that will test her English, says I have finally understood how she has felt for five years. She may be right.

14.5.3 Listening: The Last Meeting of the Link

Listen (books closed). Two classmates or your teacher read the script twice. Before listening, read the tasks in the Towards the Exam exercises and predict the kind of answer each one needs: a name, a number, a reason. It is the last online meeting of the Link Reading Club, one evening in May.

Tabella 14.9 Listening script — The Last Meeting of the Link

Sam	Right, is everyone here? Giulia, you're on mute. … There you are. OK — last meeting of the year, and we have to choose a book for the summer. The rule, as decided in March, is a retelling of a classic.
Giulia	Can I propose first? Because I have an exam in June and I need it to be useful. *The Silence of the Girls*. We read *Iliad* Book One in Greek this year, and Briseis has, what, one line?
Aoife	Half a line, if I remember your post. She goes "unwilling". That's it.
Giulia	Exactly. And Barker gives her the whole war. I think it would help my colloquio — women's voices is one of my paths.
Callum	I'm not against it, but I've read it, and it's very dark. Brilliant, but dark. For the summer I'd go for *Circe*. It's long, but you can't stop reading it.
Sam	Mind you, Callum, you said that about the geology textbook.
Callum	And I was right about that too.
Aoife	Can I suggest something different? *Dialoghi con Leucò*. Giulia sent me one dialogue in English, the one with Circe, and I loved it. It's short, it's from 1947, and Giulia can read it in the original.
Sam	But is there a translation the rest of us can read?
Giulia	There are translations, yes. Though the Italian is half the point.
Sam	Well, I'd rather not choose a book three of us read in translation and one in the original. How about this: Circe for everybody, and Giulia reads Pavese's Circe as well and tells us how they differ. A sort of… comparison.
Callum	That's basically her colloquio, Sam.
Sam	Exactly. We're helping.
Giulia	Fine. Circe. But I'm holding you to the comparison — September, first meeting, I present.
Aoife	September? You'll be at university by then.
Giulia	Which university is still a mystery, even to me. But wherever I am, I'll be online.

14.5.4 Speaking: a colloquio simulation in English

In the colloquio English may be one of the subjects you link, or the language in which you present a part of your work. The simulation below lasts about ten minutes: three to start from the material, four to develop your links, three for the commission's follow-up questions. Tabella 14.10 gives the language for each stage; Tabella 14.11 is the commission's part, to be read by a classmate or the teacher.

Tabella 14.10 Useful language — the colloquio in English

Stage	Phrases
opening from the material	*This material makes me think of… · What strikes me first is… · The three elements have one thing in common:…*
stating your path	*I'd like to develop this through three subjects. · Let me start with…, then move on to…, and finish with…*
linking	*This connects with… · A similar idea appears in… · In contrast,… · The same question was asked, two thousand years earlier, by…*
answering a follow-up	*That's a good question. · I hadn't thought of it in those terms, but… · I'd say yes, up to a point, because…*
buying time and correcting yourself	*Let me think for a second. · What I mean is… · Sorry, I meant to say…*
concluding	*So, to sum up,… · Going back to the material,… · That's why I think the image is a good starting point.*

Tabella 14.11 The commission's role — a script for the examiner (read the questions; improvise follow-ups).

Examiner	Line
Commissioner 1	Good morning. Here is your material: a text, an image and a quotation. Take a moment to look at it, and then tell us what it suggests to you.
Commissioner 1	You mentioned Tennyson. Why do you think an old man is the speaker of the poem, and not a young one?
Commissioner 2	You linked the image to science. Could you explain, simply, why a photograph of something so far away matters?
Commissioner 3	Is there a modern writer who has retold the Odyssey from a different point of view?
Commissioner 1	Last question: if you could ask Tennyson's Ulysses one thing, what would it be?

- **Task 1.** In pairs, one candidate and one commissioner, run the simulation on the material in T3 (10 minutes). Then swap roles with a material you prepare yourselves (a line of a poem from this book, an image described in words, a quotation).
- **Task 2.** Record yourself answering one follow-up question for one minute. Listen back and count the linkers you used; check one structure from the year (a concessive clause, a modal, an absolute construction).

14.5.5 Writing: an extended answer

An **extended answer** (*risposta estesa*) is a continuous text of about 250–300 words that answers a question by linking two or more authors on one theme, with a clear thesis, short quotations

and a conclusion. It is the kind of text you write in the third part of a literature test, and it is also the plan of a good spoken answer.

Tabella 14.12 Model text — an extended answer

Question: *How do two authors you have studied give a voice to women whom society kept silent?*

Charlotte Brontë and Virginia Woolf wrote eighty years apart, but both ask the same question: what happens to a woman's mind when society will not let it work? Brontë answers through a character, Woolf through an argument.

In chapter 12 of *Jane Eyre* (1847) the narrator interrupts her story to protest that "women feel just as men feel". Jane is a governess with no money and no family, and the novel's first-person narration lets her say what a Victorian woman in her position was not expected to say aloud. Much as she accepts the duties of her post, she refuses the idea that her mind should be smaller than her brother's would be. The protest is personal, but it speaks for the "millions" whom she imagines in silent revolt.

Woolf, in *A Room of One's Own* (1929), moves from feeling to material conditions. Her claim is concrete: "a woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to write fiction". To prove it she invents Judith, Shakespeare's gifted sister, who has the same talent and none of the opportunities, and whose life ends in despair. Where Brontë gives a silenced woman a voice, Woolf explains why so many voices were never heard.

Both texts, in other words, turn silence into a subject. Their methods differ — a novel's heroine speaks; an essayist reasons — but their aim is the same, and it has not disappeared: the contemporary retellings of Homer by Atwood and Barker begin from exactly this question, asked of the oldest stories we have.

Analysis. The first paragraph answers the question at once and announces the two authors and the difference between them (character / argument). Each body paragraph deals with one author, uses one short quotation integrated into a sentence, and explains it. The third paragraph begins with a comparison (*Where Brontë…, Woolf…*), so that the text links the authors instead of describing them one after the other. The conclusion widens the view to the present. The literary present is used for what the texts do (*Jane is…, Woolf invents…*), the past for dates and history.

Checklist. ✓ the question answered in the first two sentences · ✓ two authors, linked, not just listed · ✓ two or three short quotations, exact and integrated · ✓ the literary present · ✓ one comparison sentence (*while, whereas, where…, in contrast*) · ✓ a conclusion that does more than repeat · ✓ 250–300 words.

Task. Write an extended answer (250–300 words) to ONE question. a) *How do two writers of this year present war?* b) *How do two writers of this year use a classical myth to talk about their own time?* c) *How do two writers of this year show the effects of empire?*

End-of-liceo self-assessment

Five years ago, at the start of English 1, you were at A2–B1. Rate yourself honestly: ✓✓ I can do this well · ✓ I can do this with some help · ✗ not yet. I can…

- understand the main ideas and the details of a long text or talk on a familiar or academic topic;

- read a literary text in English, place it in its period and say how its form creates its meaning;
- speak for five minutes from a material, link subjects and answer unexpected questions;
- write an essay, a commentary or an extended answer of 300 words, and edit it;
- describe data, cite sources and use the formal register of study;
- keep a conversation going with speakers from other countries, adapting what I say to the situation.

Then write 80–100 words: *What can I do in English now that I could not do five years ago? What will I do with it next — university, work, a certificate, travel?* A **self-assessment** (*autovalutazione*) of this kind is a habit worth keeping: universities and employers will ask you for one in other forms.

LEARNING TO LEARN

The last month. The weeks before the exam are not for new material but for connections.

- **Make a revision timetable** backwards from the exam date: one session for each English path every week, short and regular, and a full simulation in the last ten days.
- **Prepare four or five paths** (Tabella 14.1), each with one English author, two short quotations, one Latin or Greek text and one Italian one. A path you can say in two minutes is worth more than a chapter you have only reread.
- **Practise starting from a material** with friends: give each other a line, an image, a quotation, and time each other (T3).
- **Colloquio link:** this chapter → Greek. Antigone's unwritten laws (T1) lead to the tragedies and to Plato that you read in Greek, and to the idea of natural law in Filosofia and in history.
- **Keep your English after the liceo:** read one novel a year in English, follow a podcast, keep in touch with someone abroad. A language you stop using fades in a few years; one you keep using grows.

14.6 Connections: Pavese's Gods, Homer's Women and the CLIL Module

14.6.1 Cesare Pavese, *Dialoghi con Leucò* (1947)

The Italian twin of the English retellings was written in the 1940s. In *Dialoghi con Leucò* (Einaudi, 1947) Cesare Pavese (1908–1950) retold the Greek myths in twenty-seven short dialogues between gods, heroes and mortals: Sappho and Britomartis, Oedipus and Tiresias, Achilles and Patroclus, Odysseus and Calypso. Each is introduced by a few lines in italics that place it in the

myth; then two voices talk, in a plain, intense Italian, about fate, death and what separates mortals from gods. In a short preface (*Avvertenza*) Pavese explained why he used myth at all:

> *Ma siamo convinti che il mito è un linguaggio, un mezzo espressivo — cioè non qualcosa di arbitrario ma un vivaio di simboli cui appartiene, come a tutti i linguaggi, una particolare sostanza di significati che null'altro potrebbe rendere.*
>
> — Cesare Pavese, *Dialoghi con Leucò* (1947), *Avvertenza* (text of the Einaudi edition of 1947, as transcribed on Wikisource)

"But we are convinced that myth is a language, a means of expression — that is, not something arbitrary but a nursery of symbols to which, as to all languages, there belongs a particular substance of meanings that nothing else could render." (translation by the editors). This is very close to the idea behind the English retellings: a myth is not decoration but a language that every age speaks again. In the dialogue "Le streghe", Circe talks to Leucothea about Odysseus, the only man she could not turn into an animal. One evening he called her Penelope and asked her to sing, and she sang at the loom as his wife would have done; and Circe, a goddess who knows her destiny, says:

> *Anch'io quella sera fui mortale. Ebbi un nome: Penelope.*
>
> — Cesare Pavese, *Dialoghi con Leucò*, "Le streghe" (same edition)

"That evening I too was mortal. I had a name: Penelope." Pavese's Circe, like Miller's seventy years later, is a woman who speaks of Odysseus from her side. Pavese is also the bridge between the two cultures of this book: the translator of *Moby-Dick* (1932, chapter 5) and of Joyce's *Portrait*, he read the Greeks and the Americans with the same passion. He died in Turin in 1950; his works are in the public domain.

COLLEGAMENTI

Classico: the originals — women and silence in Homer. Why do so many contemporary writers return to the women of Homer? Partly because of what the originals do and do not say. Tabella 14.13 gives four short passages. In *Odyssey* I, Penelope comes down to ask the bard to stop a song about the Greeks' return from Troy, and her son sends her back to her rooms; the classicist Mary Beard has called this scene the first recorded example of a man telling a woman that her voice is not to be heard in public. Penelope's own words, in Book XIX, show the intelligence of the weaver who winds up tricks as she winds wool. In *Iliad* I, Briseis is taken from Achilles and has only half a line, without a word to say; she speaks for the first time in Book XIX, to mourn Patroclus. With Antigone's unwritten laws (T1), these are the silences and the voices that Atwood, Barker and Miller set out to fill.

Tabella 14.13 Women in Homer: four passages. Greek text of the Perseus Digital Library (*Odyssey*, ed. A. T. Murray; *Iliad*, ed. D. B. Monro and T. W. Allen), checked against the transcriptions on Wikisource greca. Translations by the editors.

Greek	English (translation by the editors)
ἔργον ἐποίχεσθαι· μῦθος δ' ἄνδρεσσι μελήσει πᾶσι, μάλιστα δ' ἐμοί· τοῦ γὰρ κράτος ἔστ' ἐνὶ οἴκῳ. (*ergon epoichesthai; mythos d' andressi melēsei / pasi, malista d' emoi; tou gar kratos est' eni oikōi*) — *Odyssey* I.358–359	"[Go back to your rooms and tell your maids] to see to their work. Speech will be the business of men, of all men, and of me above all: for the power in this house is mine." (Telemachus to Penelope)
οἱ δὲ γάμον σπεύδουσιν· ἐγὼ δὲ δόλους τολυπεύω. (*hoi de gamon speudousin; egō de dolous tolypeuō*) — *Odyssey* XIX.137	"They hurry the wedding on; I wind up tricks." (Penelope to the stranger, who is Odysseus in disguise; *tolypeuō* is to wind wool into a ball)
ἣ δ' ἀέκουσ' ἅμα τοῖσι γυνὴ κίεν· (*hē d' aekous' hama toisi gynē kien*) — *Iliad* I.348	"And the woman went with them, unwilling." (Briseis is led away from Achilles' hut)
Πάτροκλέ μοι δειλῇ πλεῖστον κεχαρισμένε θυμῷ (*Patrokle moi deilēi pleiston kecharismene thymōi*) — *Iliad* XIX.287	"Patroclus, dearest of all to my heart, wretched as I am…" (Briseis' first words in the poem, over Patroclus' body)

COLLEGAMENTI

DNL: presenting your CLIL module. The regulations of the licei (DPR 89/2010) provide that in the fifth year one non-language subject is taught in a foreign language, by the method called CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning). Which subject, and in which language, your school decides; the colloquio may ask you to talk about it. Prepare it like a path:

- **one topic in two minutes**, in English, with the subject's own terms (for example, in physics, *electric field, current, induction*);
- **one diagram you can draw from memory** and explain while you draw it;
- **a bilingual glossary** of ten key terms (chapter 12) — the commission may ask you for the Italian word;
- **one link to an English text of the year**: X-rays and Wilde's fin de siècle (chapter 4), the telegraph and the Civil War (chapter 5), fission and Orwell (chapter 10), DNA and the 1950s (chapter 11), climate data and climate fiction (chapter 13).

The skills are the ones of this whole book: describing data (chapter 13), citing a source (chapter 6) and being clear and concise (chapter 10).

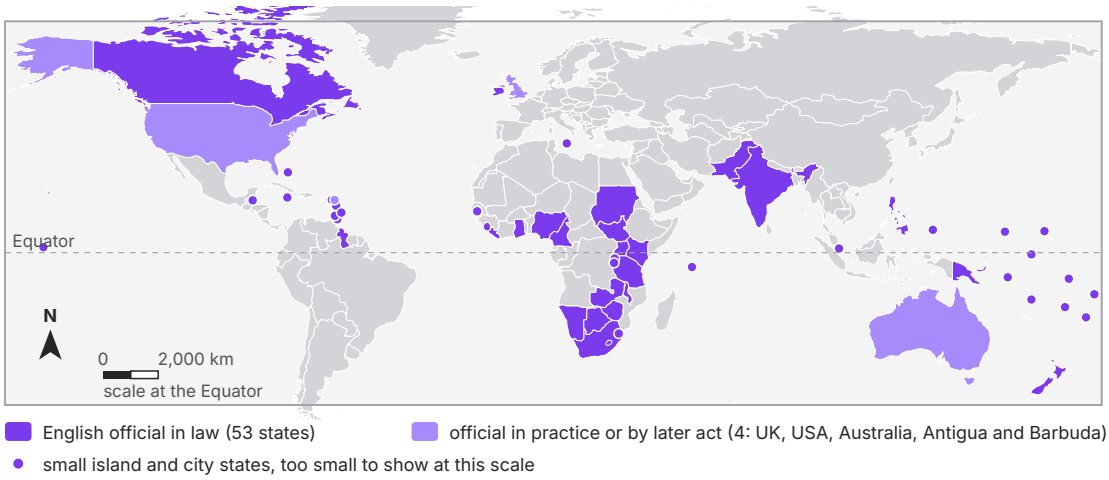


Figura 14.4 English in the world: the 57 sovereign states where English is an official language, in law (violet) or in practice (light violet). Simplified, after the list of countries where English is an official language compiled on Wikipedia (2026); dependent territories (Gibraltar, Bermuda, Puerto Rico, Hong Kong…) are not shown. Equirectangular projection; the scale is true only at the Equator.

Figura 14.4 brings us back to where the chapter began. Most of the violet on the map is the trace of the empire of chapter 6; the writers of chapter 12 and of this chapter — a St Lucian, an Irishman, a Canadian — show that the language that once came with the empire now belongs to those who write in it. When Walcott gives Homer's names to Caribbean fishermen, and Heaney

gives Sophocles' words to a Dublin stage, the classics and English travel together, and neither belongs to one country any longer.

SINTESI

- English has about 370 million first-language speakers and nearly a billion second-language speakers (Ethnologue, 2021): it is global because of its non-native speakers.
- English is an official language in law in 53 sovereign states and in practice in four more, mostly former British colonies; it remains an official language of the EU after Brexit.
- Welsh (official in Wales since 2011), Scottish Gaelic (2005) and Irish in Northern Ireland (2022) have legal recognition; Scots, Ulster Scots and Cornish are recognised minority languages.
- The esame di maturità (the name restored in 2025) consists of written tests and a colloquio; at the classico English may be examined in the colloquio. INVALSI tests English reading and listening in the spring.
- A retelling tells an old story from a new point of view; intertextuality (Kristeva) is the network of relations between texts; a version is a free translation that is also a new work.
- Walcott's *Omeros* (1990) moves Homer to St Lucia; Heaney's *The Cure at Troy* (1990) and *The Burial at Thebes* (2004) are versions of Sophocles.
- Atwood (*The Penelopiad*, 2005), Barker (*The Silence of the Girls*, 2018), Miller (*Circe*, 2018) and Oswald (*Memorial*, 2011) retell Homer from the side of women and of the dead.
- Antigone's unwritten laws (*Antigone* 450–457) set the gods' eternal law against a ruler's decree.
- In the colloquio, start from the material, name one theme, link three subjects and come back to an English author; prepare four or five thematic paths.
- The language of English 5 is the language of study: tense choice, concession, modals, absolutes, citing, connotation, represented speech, concision, pragmatics, World Englishes and data.
- Pavese's *Dialoghi con Leucò* (1947) is the Italian twin of the English retellings: myth as "un linguaggio", Circe who becomes, for one evening, Penelope.

ESERCIZI

History and Literature

1. ● According to Ethnologue's 2021 estimate, which statement about English is true?

   A. It has more native speakers than any other language.

   B. It has far more non-native speakers than native ones.

   C. Its native and non-native speakers are about equal in number.

   D. It is spoken only in countries where it is an official language.

2. ● Seamus Heaney's *The Cure at Troy* (1990) is a version of…
   - **A.** Sophocles' *Antigone*
   - **B.** Euripides' *Trojan Women*
   - **C.** Homer's *Iliad*
   - **D.** Sophocles' *Philoctetes*

3. ● Who tells most of the story in Pat Barker's *The Silence of the Girls*?
   - **A.** Briseis
   - **B.** Penelope
   - **C.** Patroclus
   - **D.** Andromache

4. ● In Derek Walcott's *Omeros* the Homeric world is moved to…
   - **A.** Northern Ireland
   - **B.** Nigeria
   - **C.** St Lucia
   - **D.** Jamaica

5. ● Match each author with a work and a date. Authors: Walcott · Heaney · Atwood · Oswald · Miller · Pavese. Works: *Circe* · *Memorial* · *Dialoghi con Leucò* · *The Burial at Thebes* · *Omeros* · *The Penelopiad*. Dates: 1947 · 1990 · 2004 · 2005 · 2011 · 2018.

6. ●● True or false? Correct the false statements. a English remained an official language of the EU after the UK left. b Scottish Gaelic was recognised as an official language of Scotland in 2011. c In the 2021 census about 18% of people in Wales aged three or over said they could speak Welsh. d At the liceo classico English is one of the written tests of the esame di maturità. e The word "intertextuality" was introduced by Julia Kristeva. f In the *Odyssey* Telemachus hangs twelve maids.

7. ●● Answer in 50–80 words each. a What is the difference between a retelling, a version and a translation? Give an example of each from this book or from your Latin and Greek lessons. b Why, according to David Crystal, does a language become global? Use the history you have studied this year to support the idea.

Text Analysis

8. ●● In *Antigone* 450–457 (T1), Antigone justifies her action by appealing to…
   - **A.** a law of Thebes older than Creon
   - **B.** the will of the people of Thebes
   - **C.** the unwritten laws of the gods, which have no beginning
   - **D.** a promise she made to her dead father

9. ●● T1: a Who made the proclamation, according to Antigone, and who did not? b Why does she call Creon "a mortal"? c Translate into English the Greek words *agrapta nomima* and explain why the adjective is important to her argument.

10. ●● T2: a From where, and how long after the events, does Atwood's Penelope tell her story? b Who are the maids, what happens to them in the *Odyssey*, and what role do they have in the novel? c Give two ways in which Atwood's Penelope differs from Homer's.

11. ●● T3: Tennyson's line 70 contains four verbs in a row. Name the device (or devices) and explain the effect. Then say why line 69 begins with the opposite idea (*Made weak…*).

12. ●●● Write a PEE paragraph (80–100 words): how do T1 and T2 give a voice to women who defy, or are destroyed by, a man's decision? Use the Greek of T1 (in translation) and the reading guide of T2.

13. ●●● Compare T1 with a text from another chapter of this book in which an individual stands against the power of a state. Which is it, and what is the main difference? (60–80 words)

14. ●●● **Colloquio link** (60–80 words): T1 → philosophy. Explain how Antigone's conflict with Creon could introduce a philosopher you have studied this year.

Language

15. ● Which grammar point is it? Name the structure and the chapter of this book where you studied it. a *Much as Heaney admired Sophocles, he changed his language.* b *The quarrel over, Briseis is given back to Achilles.* c *It is strange that Homer should give her only half a line.* d *Atwood suggests that Penelope is not entirely innocent.* e *"Shall we read Circe?" "Sounds good."* f *Speakers rose by 5% to just over a million.*

16. ● Put the verbs in brackets in the right tense for a literary essay. In *The Burial at Thebes* Antigone (1 bury) her brother against Creon's order. Heaney (2 write) the play for the Abbey Theatre in 2004. Since then it (3 be) staged many times. Critics (4 agree) that the play (5 speak) to its own century.

17. ●● Rewrite each sentence with the word in brackets, keeping the meaning. a Although the maids were innocent, they were hanged. (AS) b Although she tried hard, Penelope could not stop the suitors. (MIGHT) c It is surprising that Briseis says almost nothing. (SHOULD) d There is nothing better to do, so let's start revising now. (WELL)

18. ●● Rewrite with an absolute construction or *with* + object + participle. a When the suitors were dead, Odysseus turned to the maids. b Penelope unpicks the shroud at night, and her maids help her. c As the exam was approaching, Giulia prepared five paths.

19. ●● Correct the mistakes (one in each sentence). a *In Omeros Achille and Hector loved the same woman.* b *Pavese has translated Moby-Dick in 1932.* c *Atwood claims Penelope to be ironic.* d *English has rose in importance since the war.* e *Being a version, Heaney changed the language of the play.* f *She could hardly to believe it.*

20. ●● Integrate the quotation into a sentence of your own, using a reporting verb and the right tense. a Antigone, *Antigone* 456–457 (translation): "they are alive not now or yesterday, but always". b Woolf: "a woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to write fiction". c Pavese: "il mito è un linguaggio" (give your own translation in brackets).

21. ●●● Key-word transformations. Complete the second sentence so that it means the same as the first, using the word in capitals and two to five words. a I didn't revise the war poets, and now I regret it. (WISH) I _____ the war poets. b She only understood the poem when she read it aloud. (UNTIL) Not _____ aloud did she understand the poem. c People believe that Homer was blind. (BELIEVED) Homer _____ blind. d If you need help, ask the commission. (SHOULD) _____ help, ask the commission. e I admire Penelope's intelligence more than anything else. (WHAT) _____ is Penelope's intelligence. f The teacher didn't let us use dictionaries. (ALLOWED) We _____ dictionaries.

22. ●●● Edit this paragraph for clarity and concision (chapter 10): cut at least fifteen words without losing any information. *It is a fact that is very important to note that, due to the fact that Heaney was a poet who came from Northern Ireland, at that point in time he was in a position to understand in a very deep way the conflict that exists between loyalty and conscience.*

23. ●● Translate into English. a Per quanto ammiri l'*Odissea*, preferisco la Penelope di Atwood. b È naturale che gli scrittori di oggi tornino a Omero. c Finito l'esame, Giulia partirà per Dublino.

Vocabulary

24. ● Complete with the right form of the word in brackets (Tabella 14.7). a Atwood offers a new _____ of the *Odyssey*. (INTERPRET) b The maids' songs are _____ of the injustice they suffered. (SYMBOL) c Heaney's version is _____ close to Sophocles. (SURPRISE) d Barker places _____ on the women's experience. (EMPHATIC) e Your answer should be _____ , not descriptive. (ANALYSE) f The _____ of the two novels shows their differences. (COMPARE)

25. ●● Word-formation cloze. Use the word in capitals to form a word that fits the gap. *Margaret Atwood's Penelope is one of the most (1)* _____ *(FORGET) narrators of recent fiction. In Homer she is a model of (2)* _____ *(FAITHFUL); in Atwood she is ironic and not entirely (3)* _____ *(INNOCENCE). The (4)* _____ *(HANG) of the twelve maids, which Homer describes in a few lines, becomes the novel's (5)* _____ *(CENTRE) event. Their songs are (6)* _____ *(DELIBERATE) simple, and all the more (7)* _____ *(POWER) for it. Few retellings are so (8)* _____ *(SUCCESS) in giving a voice to the (9)* _____ *(VOICE).*

26. ●● Choose the right verb for each collocation and write a sentence about a text of this year with three of them: *draw / make* a comparison · *raise / rise* a question · *reach / arrive* a conclusion · *put / bring* forward an argument · *place / give* emphasis on · *carry out / do out* an analysis.

Writing and Speaking

27. ●●● Write an extended answer (250–300 words) to one of the three questions in the Writing section. Use the checklist, two short quotations and one comparison sentence. Then add your end-of-liceo self-assessment (80–100 words).

28. ●●● Colloquio simulation. Start from this material and speak for three minutes, then answer the follow-up question. *Material: Antigone, "they are alive not now or yesterday, but always" (T1) — an image described in words: a crowd holding candles in a square at night, in silence — the word* ***conscience****.* Follow-up: *Can disobeying a law ever be right in a democracy?*

Towards the Exam

29. ●● Reading (INVALSI-style, B1–B2): Callum's post (Tabella 14.8). a Multiple choice — choose A, B, C or D. (1) The man on the ferry suggests that Callum A was not looking in the right place B saw no dolphins, like most visitors C should have come in summer D had seen dolphins without realising it. (2) In the shop, people A refused to speak English B switched to English while Callum was there C spoke only Gaelic D asked Callum to speak Gaelic. (3) The lecturer's "less comfortable figure" is that A fewer people speak Gaelic in the islands than in 2011 B only 2.5% of Scots have Gaelic skills C Gaelic-medium schools are closing D nobody answered her question. (4) Murdo's remark suggests that A schools are teaching Gaelic badly B his grandchildren refuse to learn Gaelic C what children learn at school is not always the language of their daily life D phones should be banned. b Short answers (maximum four words each). (5) What were the students on Lewis to study? (6) Which Gaelic word did Callum understand? (7) What did Callum bring back, apart from a cold and a dictionary? c Which paragraph (1–6, not counting the title) (8) explains how a language can be lost through politeness; (9) gives statistics; (10) describes bilingual signs.

30. ●● Listening (INVALSI-style): The Last Meeting of the Link (Tabella 14.9). a Answer in a few words. (1) What kind of book must the club choose? (2) Why does Giulia propose *The Silence of the Girls*? (3) What does Callum say about it? (4) Why can Giulia read Pavese in the original, unlike the others? (5) What compromise does Sam suggest? b Choose the right answer. (6) When Sam says "Mind you, Callum", he is A agreeing B apologising C teasing Callum D changing the subject. (7) When Giulia says "Which university is still a mystery, even to me", she means that A she has not decided yet B she failed the entrance test C she does not want to go D the club must guess.

31. ●● Open cloze. Write ONE word in each gap. *Five years (1)* _____ *, Giulia could hardly order a coffee in English. Now she reads Woolf and Heaney, and (2)* _____ *she still makes mistakes, she is no longer afraid (3)* _____ *them. (4)* _____ *she has learnt above all is that a language is not a list of rules (5)* _____ *a way of meeting people. Had it not (6)* _____ *for the Link, she says, she would never (7)* _____ *read Jane Eyre in English. (8)* _____ *university she chooses, she intends to keep it up.*

32. ●●● Colloquio prompt. *Material:* Penelope's line "They hurry the wedding on; I wind up tricks" (*Odyssey* XIX.137) — an image described in words: a loom with half a cloth on it, and a pair of hands unpicking the threads by lamplight — the title of Pat Barker's novel, *The Silence of the Girls*. Guided questions: a What theme links the three elements? b Which three subjects would you choose, and with which texts? c Which English authors of this book would you reach, and how? d Prepare an answer to the follow-up: *Are retellings of Homer better than Homer?*

PER APPROFONDIRE

- [CRY] D. Crystal, *English as a Global Language*: the last chapter, on the future of global English.
- [NOR] S. Greenblatt (ed.), *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, vol. F: the selections from Walcott and Heaney.
- [SAN] A. Sanders, *The Short Oxford History of English Literature*: the chapter on literature after 1945.
- [ASH] B. Ashcroft, G. Griffiths, H. Tiffin, *The Empire Writes Back*: the introduction, on how writers answer the texts of the canon.
- [ABR] M. H. Abrams, G. G. Harpham, *A Glossary of Literary Terms*: the entries on myth and on intertextuality.
- [SWA] M. Swan, *Practical English Usage*: the entries on word formation (prefixes and suffixes).
- [IND] *Indicazioni nazionali per i licei*, Lingua e cultura straniera: the quinto anno, to see what the whole year has asked of you.

Glossario del capitolo

Academic vocabulary
lessico accademico — the words used across subjects to analyse, compare, argue and conclude.

Extended answer
risposta estesa — a continuous text of about 250–300 words that answers a question by linking authors on one theme.

Intertextuality
intertestualità — the relations that link a text to the other texts it quotes, echoes or transforms (Kristeva's term).

Minority language
lingua minoritaria — a language spoken by a smaller community within a state whose main language is another.

Multiple matching
abbinamento multiplo — a task in which items are matched to the parts of a text or to speakers.

Official language
lingua ufficiale — a language a state uses by law in its parliament, courts, schools or public documents.

Open cloze
cloze aperto — a text with gaps, each to be filled with one word, with no options given.

Retelling
riscrittura — a new work that tells an old story again, changing its point of view, setting or form.

Revisionist mythmaking
riscrittura revisionista del mito — retelling old myths so as to question the values they carry (Alicia Ostriker's phrase, 1982).

Scottish Gaelic
gaelico scozzese — the Celtic language of the Highlands and Islands, an official language of Scotland since 2005.

Self-assessment
autovalutazione — judging your own abilities and progress against clear statements.

Starting material
materiale di partenza — the text, image, quotation or document from which the colloquio begins.

Thematic path
percorso tematico — a route through the programme that follows one theme across authors, periods and subjects.

Unwritten laws
leggi non scritte — in Sophocles, the eternal laws of the gods, such as the duty to bury the dead, which no ruler can overrule.

Version
versione libera, rifacimento — a free translation that keeps the meaning of its original but rewrites its language as a new work.

Word-formation cloze
esercizio di formazione delle parole — a text with gaps, each to be filled with a word formed from a given root.

Soluzioni

1. B (about 370 million native and nearly a billion non-native speakers; Mandarin Chinese has more native speakers; English is also widely spoken where it is not official).

2. D (*Antigone* became *The Burial at Thebes*, 2004).

3. A (Penelope narrates Atwood's *The Penelopiad*; Patroclus narrates Miller's *The Song of Achilles*).

4. C (Walcott was born in Castries, St Lucia).

5. Walcott — *Omeros* — 1990 · Heaney — *The Burial at Thebes* — 2004 · Atwood — *The Penelopiad* — 2005 · Oswald — *Memorial* — 2011 · Miller — *Circe* — 2018 · Pavese — *Dialoghi con Leucò* — 1947.

6. a T. b F — in 2005 (Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act); 2011 is the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure. c T (17.8%, about 538,000). d F — it is not a written test at the classico, but it may be examined in the colloquio. e T (in the late 1960s). f T (Book XXII; Odysseus orders their death).

7. *Traccia.* a A **translation** reproduces a text in another language as faithfully as possible (your *versione* from Greek or Latin); a **version** keeps the structure and meaning but rewrites the language freely, as a new work (Heaney's *The Burial at Thebes*); a **retelling** tells the story again from a new point of view or in a new world, as a new work (Atwood's *The Penelopiad*, Walcott's *Omeros*). b Crystal argues that a language becomes global because of the power of its speakers — political and military, then economic, technological and cultural — not because of its structure. English spread with the British Empire (chapter 6: India, Africa), stayed in many former colonies after independence (chapter 12), and was then carried by the economic and technological power of the United States in the twentieth century (chapter 10) and by science and the internet.

8. C.

9. a The proclamation was made by Creon; not by Zeus, nor by Justice (Dikē), who lives with the gods of the underworld. b To remind him that he is a man and cannot overrule the laws of the gods: his power is limited and temporary. c "Unwritten laws (customs)": their being unwritten shows that no human being made them; they have no author and no date, while Creon's order is written, recent and his own.

10. a From the underworld (Hades), long after the events, in our own time, in a conversational, ironic voice. b Twelve slave women of Penelope's household; in *Odyssey* XXII, after the killing of the suitors, Odysseus orders their death and Telemachus hangs them; in the novel they speak as a chorus between Penelope's chapters, in many forms, and accuse Odysseus. c *Any two:* she narrates, instead of being described; she is ironic and funny; she is less perfect and not entirely innocent; she admits she knew more than she showed; she resents Helen.

11. An accumulation of infinitives in asyndeton (no *and* until the last verb), building to a climax; with the negative last verb (*not to yield*) it sounds like a vow or a creed, and the regular iambic rhythm of the monosyllables makes it emphatic. Line 69 states the losses (*weak by time and fate*) so that the will of line 70 appears as a victory over them: the antithesis *weak… but strong* is a concession (*Though much is taken, much abides*, chapter 2).

12. Model: *Both texts let a woman speak against a decision that a man has made about the dead. Antigone tells Creon that his order cannot overrule "the unwritten and unshakeable laws of the gods", which are alive "not now or yesterday, but always": her voice is clear and certain, because it claims an authority older than any king. Atwood's maids have no such authority; in Homer they have no words at all. Their voice comes after their death, as a chorus that refuses to let Odysseus rest. Where Antigone's defiance is tragic, theirs is ironic —*

but both make the reader see the cost of a man's power. (about 100 words)

13. *Traccia.* The best comparison is *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (chapter 10): Winston, like Antigone, defies the state; but Antigone appeals to an eternal law and dies certain of it, while Winston has no law to appeal to — the Party controls even truth — and he is broken, not killed as a martyr. (Other valid answers: Jane Eyre against social convention, chapter 3; Owen against the "old Lie" of patriotic duty, chapter 7.)

14. *Traccia.* Hegel read *Antigone* as the tragic collision of two rights, each one-sided: the family and its divine law (Antigone) against the state and its human law (Creon). Neither is simply wrong, and the tragedy is the destruction of both, from which a higher reconciliation must come — an example of his dialectic. Kierkegaard also wrote on Antigone, and the conflict between conscience and law can lead to natural law in history and to civil disobedience (Thoreau, chapter 5).

15. a concessive clause with *much as* (chapter 2). b absolute construction (chapter 4). c putative *should* (chapter 3). d reporting verb in a citation, present tense (chapter 6). e spoken grammar: ellipsis (chapter 8). f describing data: *rise by / to*, approximation (chapter 13).

16. 1 buries (literary present) · 2 wrote (author's life, past) · 3 has been (present perfect: lasting influence) · 4 agree (what critics argue: present) · 5 speaks.

17. a *Innocent as / though the maids were, they were hanged.* b *Try as she might, Penelope could not stop the suitors.* c *It is surprising that Briseis should say almost nothing.* d *We might / may as well start revising now.*

18. a *The suitors dead, Odysseus turned to the maids.* b *Penelope unpicks the shroud at night, her maids helping her. / …, with her maids helping her.* c *With the exam approaching, Giulia prepared five paths. / The exam approaching, Giulia…*

19. a … Achille and Hector **love** the same woman (literary present). b Pavese **translated** *Moby-Dick* in 1932 (finished past time: past simple). c Atwood **claims that** Penelope **is** ironic (*claim* + *that* clause; *claim* + infinitive refers to the subject: *Penelope claims to be…*). d English has **risen** in importance… e **The play being a version**, Heaney… / **Since it is a version**, the play changes… (dangling participle: the subject is not Heaney). f She could hardly **believe** it (modal + bare infinitive).

20. *Models:* a *Antigone insists that the gods' laws "are alive not now or yesterday, but always" (Antigone 456–457).* b *Woolf argues that "a woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to write fiction".* c *Pavese maintains that "il mito è un linguaggio" (myth is a language), not decoration.* (Present tense for what authors argue; the quotation fits the grammar of the sentence.)

21. a I **wish I had revised** the war poets. b Not **until she read it** aloud did she understand the poem. c Homer **is believed to have been** blind. d **Should you need** help, ask the commission. e **What I admire most** (or **What I most admire**) is Penelope's intelligence. f We **were not allowed to use** dictionaries.

22. *Model (17 words, from 50): Because Heaney was a poet from Northern Ireland, he understood deeply the conflict between loyalty and conscience.* Cut: *It is a fact that is very important to note that* (padding), *due to the fact that → because*, *who came from → from*, *at that point in time* (adds nothing to the past tense), *was in a position to understand → understood*, *in a very deep way → deeply*, *that exists*.

23. a *Much as I admire the Odyssey, I prefer Atwood's Penelope.* b *It is natural that today's writers should return to Homer.* c *The exam over, Giulia will leave for Dublin. / Once the exam is over, …*

24. a interpretation · b symbolic · c surprisingly · d emphasis · e analytical · f comparison.

25. 1 unforgettable · 2 faithfulness · 3 innocent · 4 hanging · 5 central · 6 deliberately · 7 powerful · 8 successful · 9 voiceless.

26. draw (or make) a comparison · raise a question · reach a conclusion · put forward an argument · place emphasis on · carry out an analysis. *Example: Barker places emphasis on Briseis' silence, and her novel raises a question that Homer never asks.*

27. Assess with the checklist (content and links 5 · organisation 3 · language: literary present, linkers, one year-5 structure 4 · vocabulary and register 3). For a): Owen's "Dulce et Decorum Est" and Brooke's "The Soldier" (or Orwell); b): Joyce's *Ulysses* and Tennyson, or Atwood and Heaney; c): Conrad and Achebe (or Kipling and Tagore).

28. *Model (about 200 words): The material makes me think of the conflict between conscience and the law. Antigone claims that the laws of the gods are "alive… always", older than any ruler; the silent crowd with candles is a modern image of the same idea — people who protest not with violence but by being there. I'd like to develop this through three subjects. In Greek, Sophocles' Antigone buries her brother against Creon's order and accepts death. In philosophy, Hegel saw in her the clash of two rights, the family's and the state's. In history, the twentieth century is full of peaceful protest against unjust laws. In English, I would link it to Orwell's Nineteen Eighty-Four, where Winston tries to keep his conscience against a state that controls even truth, and to Heaney, who heard in Creon the voice of the politics of 2003.* Follow-up: *I'd say yes, up to a point: in a democracy we can change laws by voting, so disobedience must be the last resort — but when a law denies a basic right, conscience may come first, as long as you are open about it and accept the consequences, as Antigone did.*

29. a (1) B · (2) B · (3) A · (4) C. b (5) peat bogs, coastal erosion · (6) *cofaidh* (coffee) · (7) peat samples (forty kilos). c (8) paragraph 5 · (9) paragraph 3 · (10) paragraph 2.

30. a (1) a retelling of a classic · (2) she read *Iliad* I in Greek and it would help her colloquio (women's voices is one of her paths) · (3) it is brilliant but very dark · (4) because the book is in Italian, her own language · (5) *Circe* for everybody, and Giulia also reads Pavese's Circe and compares them. b (6) C · (7) A.

31. 1 ago · 2 although / though / while · 3 of · 4 What · 5 but · 6 been · 7 have · 8 Whichever / Whatever.

32. *Traccia.* a Women's silence and women's intelligence: weaving as a woman's work and as a trick; the voice that the epic did not give. b Greek: *Odyssey* XIX and I.356–359 (Telemachus silences Penelope), *Iliad* I.348 (Briseis); Italian: Pavese's Circe who becomes Penelope, or Deledda; history or philosophy: the history of women's rights (chapter 3: the Married Women's Property Acts; chapter 9: the vote in 1918 and the Equal Franchise Act of 1928). c Atwood's *The Penelopiad* and Barker (retellings), Woolf's Judith Shakespeare (chapter 9), Jane Eyre's "women feel just as men feel" (chapter 3). d *Neither better nor worse: they are different works that need Homer to mean anything. A retelling makes us read the original again with new questions, as Atwood makes us notice the twelve maids — but Homer's poems remain the source, and they are richer than any single answer to them.*