VERIFICA

IV

Verifica di fine parte IV

Chapters 11–14 · 90 minutes · 100 points

English 5 · Parte IV · The Contemporary World · versione 1.0
Verifica: Verifica di fine parte IV · pagine 501–508 del volume completo · estratto per lo studio

History and Literature (20 points)

1. ● The label "Theatre of the Absurd" was… (1 pt)
   - **A.** Beckett's own name for his plays, used in the programme of *Waiting for Godot*
   - **B.** the title of a book by the critic Martin Esslin, published in 1961
   - **C.** a phrase invented by the journalists who reviewed *Look Back in Anger*
   - **D.** the name of the London theatre where Pinter's first plays were staged

2. ● The title of Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* (1958) comes from… (1 pt)
   - **A.** an Igbo proverb quoted by Okonkwo
   - **B.** Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*
   - **C.** the Book of Genesis
   - **D.** W. B. Yeats's "The Second Coming"

3. ● In June 1948 the *Empire Windrush*… (1 pt)
   - **A.** brought to Britain one of the first large groups of migrants from the Caribbean
   - **B.** carried British troops home from India after Partition
   - **C.** took the first British emigrants to Australia after the war
   - **D.** was the ship on which the Festival of Britain was opened

4. ● Which of these is a retelling of Sophocles? (1 pt)
   - **A.** Alice Oswald, *Memorial*
   - **B.** Madeline Miller, *Circe*
   - **C.** Seamus Heaney, *The Burial at Thebes*
   - **D.** Pat Barker, *The Silence of the Girls*

5. ●● Match the terms (1–6) with the definitions (a–f). (6 × 1 pt) 1 villanelle · 2 comedy of menace · 3 writing back · 4 magic realism · 5 metafiction · 6 intertextuality — a fiction that draws attention to itself as fiction, for example by showing the act of writing · b the network of relations that link a text to the other texts it quotes, echoes or transforms · c a nineteen-line poem on two rhymes, with two refrains that alternate and meet in the last stanza · d a play in which ordinary conversation hides a threat that is never fully explained · e realistic narration in which impossible events are told as if they were normal · f literature from former colonies that answers the stories the empire told about them

6. ●●● Answer in 50–70 words each. (2 × 5 pts) a What does "writing back" mean? Explain it with Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* and the novel it answers. b Why have so many recent retellings of Homer been told by women characters? Refer to two works.

Text Analysis (25 points)

Read a poem by the American poet Edna St. Vincent Millay (1892–1950). It was first published in 1949 and collected after her death in *Mine the Harvest* (1954). Millay died in 1950, so her work is in the public domain in Italy. In the *Odyssey* Penelope keeps the suitors waiting by weaving a shroud by day and unpicking it by night; and in Book VIII Odysseus, a guest at the court of the Phaeacians, weeps when the bard Demodocus sings of Troy, and pulls his cloak over his head so that the others will not see his tears.

Tabella V4.1 Edna St. Vincent Millay, "An Ancient Gesture" (1949), complete. Text of Representative Poetry Online (University of Toronto Libraries, after *Mine the Harvest*, 1954), checked against a second transcription; the line numbers count lines of verse only.

I thought, as I wiped my eyes on the corner of my apron:	1
Penelope did this too.	
And more than once: you can't keep weaving all day	
And undoing it all through the night;	
Your arms get tired, and the back of your neck gets tight;	5
And along towards morning, when you think it will never be light,	
And your husband has been gone, and you don't know where, for years,	
Suddenly you burst into tears;	
There is simply nothing else to do.	
And I thought, as I wiped my eyes on the corner of my apron:	10
This is an ancient gesture, authentic, antique,	
In the very best tradition, classic, Greek;	
Ulysses did this too.	
But only as a gesture,—a gesture which implied	
To the assembled throng that he was much too moved to speak.	15
He learned it from Penelope …	
Penelope, who really cried.	

Glosses. *apron* a cloth worn over clothes to keep them clean while cooking or working · *along towards morning* (AmE, informal) as morning approaches · *authentic* genuine, real · *antique* very

old (and valuable) · *the assembled throng* (formal, literary) the crowd gathered together · *moved* touched by a strong emotion.

7. ● Answer the questions. (3 × 2 pts) a Who is the speaker, where is she, and what has just happened to her? b Why, according to the first stanza, did Penelope cry? Give two reasons from the text. c What is the difference, in the second stanza, between Penelope's tears and those of Ulysses?

8. ●● Form. (4 × 1 pt) a How many stanzas and how many lines does the poem have, and are the lines regular in length? b Find two pairs of rhyming words in stanza 1 and one group of three in stanza 2. c Which line is repeated, with a small change, and what is the effect? d Is the poem in free verse, blank verse or a regular form? Explain in one sentence.

9. ●● Language. (4 × 1 pt) a Find five words in lines 11–12 that belong to the language of tradition and value. Why does the speaker pile them up? b Lines 3–9 use *you*. Who is "you", and what is the effect of this spoken grammar? c What is the tone of *much too moved to speak* (l. 15): admiring, ironic or neutral? d Why is the word *really* in the last line so important?

10. ●●● Context. (3 pts) a In *Odyssey* VIII Odysseus hides his tears under his cloak. Is Millay's reading of him in lines 14–16 faithful to Homer, or a deliberate twist? (2 pts) b In what sense is this poem a retelling (chapter 14), although it tells no story? (1 pt)

11. ●●● Write a PEE paragraph (80–100 words): how does Millay use a domestic moment to give Penelope a voice? Use two short quotations and link the poem to one other text of Part IV or of this year. (8 pts: content 5, language 3)

Language (25 points)

12. ●● Open cloze. Read Giulia's message and write ONE word in each gap. (6 × 1 pt) *Much (1)* _____ *I love Homer, I have to admit that Atwood's Penelope made me laugh more than the original. (2)* _____ *I known how funny she was, I would have read the novel years ago! Prof.ssa Rossi says it is natural that a modern writer (3)* _____ *want to give the maids a voice. Anyway, (4)* _____ *the simulation over, Marta and I are going for a pizza. Try (5)* _____ *I might, I cannot remember a single line of Tennyson tonight — so I might (6)* _____ *well stop revising and go out.*

13. ●● Choose the correct option. (5 × 1 pt) a The number of Welsh speakers has (raised / risen / rose / arisen) since the 1990s in some age groups. b Achebe (claims / says to / tells / argues to) that Conrad dehumanises Africans. c In *Waiting for Godot* the two tramps (waited / have waited / wait / had waited) for a man who never comes. d In American English, "I've (gotten / getting / get / gets) much better at Greek since September" is normal. e "It's a bit cold in here, isn't it?" is, in context, most likely (a complaint about the weather / a request to close the window / a question about the heating / a refusal).

14. ●●● 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. (6 × 1 pt) a Although she was tired, Penelope went on weaving. (AS) Tired _____ , Penelope went on weaving. b When the quarrel had ended, Briseis was given back to Achilles. (OVER) The _____ , Briseis was given back to Achilles. c I regret not reading *Omeros* last summer. (WISH) I _____ *Omeros* last summer. d The examiners didn't allow us to use phones. (LET) The examiners _____ phones. e It is said that Beckett denied that Godot was God. (SAID) Beckett _____ that Godot was God. f She didn't understand the poem until she read it aloud. (DID) Only when she read the poem aloud _____ it.

15. ●● Each sentence has ONE mistake. Find it and correct it. (4 × 1 pt) a *In Never Let Me Go Kathy remembered her years at Hailsham.* b *Having arrived at Tilbury, the weather was cold and grey.* c *Last year emissions rose of 2%, from 100 to 102 million tonnes.* d *Owen's soldiers are not "the fallen": they are died in the mud.*

16. ●● Translate into English. (2 × 2 pts) a Per quanto strano possa sembrare, Penelope è la vera protagonista dell'*Odissea*. b Finita la lettura, la commissione ha chiesto a Giulia di collegare il testo a tre materie.

Vocabulary and Reading (15 points)

Read Aoife's post on the Link Reading Club blog.

The Link Reading Club Blog · The Odyssey on a Research Ship · by Aoife, Galway

When I signed up for marine science, I imagined myself in a lab coat. I did not imagine a week on a research ship in the Atlantic, west of the Aran Islands, sorting plankton at two in the morning while the deck moved under my feet. Nobody warned me that the sea would be the hardest part of the course.

Every evening, when the samples were labelled and the other students had gone to bed, I read. Callum had persuaded the club to choose *Circe* for the summer, so I had brought it in my bag, wrapped in two plastic bags against the spray. I have never read a book in a better place. When Odysseus' ship arrives at Circe's island, I was sitting in a cabin that smelt of diesel, with the real sea banging against the wall beside my head.

What surprised me was how differently the book made me look at the sea. In Homer, as Giulia explained to us, the sea is mostly an obstacle: something the hero has to cross to get home. For Circe, alone on her island for centuries, it is the thing that brings every visitor, good and bad, and then takes them away. After three nights on the ship I understood her better than Odysseus. The sea is not a road. It decides when you leave.

On the last night the chief scientist, a quiet woman from Connemara, came up on deck while I was reading. She asked me what the book was and laughed when I told her. Her grandmother, she said, used to call the sea "the grey widow-maker", because of all the fishermen it had taken from the islands. In her family the women had waited, like Penelope, and some of them had waited for nothing.

I came home with forty jars of plankton and a lot of questions. Giulia wants to compare Miller's Circe with Pavese's in September. I have a different proposal: next year, the club should read the stories of the women who waited on the shore. Somebody must have written them. If not, perhaps one of us will.

17. ● Choose the right answer, A, B, C or D. (4 × 1 pt) a Before the trip, Aoife A expected to work mainly in a laboratory B had been told that the sea would be difficult C wanted to study plankton at night D had already spent a week at sea. b She read *Circe* A while sorting samples B with the other students C when her work was finished D only on the last night. c According to Aoife, in Homer the sea is mainly A a source of beauty B something that stands between the hero and his home C a dangerous god D Circe's home. d The chief scientist's story shows that A she disliked Aoife's book B her grandmother was a fisherman C the waiting women of the *Odyssey* had real counterparts D the islands had no fishermen left.

18. ●● Match each paragraph (2–5) with a heading. There is one heading you do not need. (4 × 1 pt) A A voice from the islands B Reading in the right place C Why the trip was cancelled D Two ways of seeing the sea E A plan for the club

19. ● Find words or phrases in the post that mean: (3 × 1 pt) a registered to take part (paragraph 1, two words) b convinced someone to do something (paragraph 2) c hitting noisily and repeatedly (paragraph 2)

20. ●● Word formation. Complete with a word formed from the word in capitals. (4 × 1 pt) a For Circe the sea is a constant source of _____. (CERTAIN — use a negative form) b Aoife found the night work _____ tiring. (SURPRISE) c The women's _____ for the fishermen could last for years. (WAIT) d Aoife's proposal is the most _____ idea in the post. (ORIGIN)

Writing (15 points)

21. ●●● Choose ONE task. (15 pts) **A · Data commentary** (200–250 words). Describe and compare the data: *Welsh speakers in Wales, people aged three and over (census): 2001 — 582,400; 2011 — 562,000; 2021 — 538,300 (17.8%). People in Scotland with some Gaelic skills, aged three and over: 2011 — 1.7%; 2022 — 2.5% (about 130,000); in the Western Isles in 2022 — 57.2%.* (Sources: Office for National Statistics, Census 2021; Scotland's Census 2022.) Give an overview, the key features and one comparison; no personal opinion. **B · Extended answer** (250–300 words). *How do two writers of this year give a voice to people whom history or myth left silent?* Link two authors from different parts of the book, with two short quotations.
Assessment criteria: task achievement and content (5 pts) · organisation and cohesion (3 pts) · grammar, including at least one structure of this year (4 pts) · vocabulary and register (3 pts).

Towards the colloquio (not scored)

22. ●●● Colloquio prompt. *Material:* the last line of Millay's poem, "Penelope, who really cried" — an image described in words: a war memorial in a small Irish fishing village, with a list of names of men lost at sea and, below it, a bench where two old women sit — the word **waiting**. Guided questions: a What theme links the three elements? b Which three subjects would you link to it, and with which texts (Greek, Italian, history or science)? c Which two English authors of this book would you reach, and how? d Prepare a one-minute answer to the follow-up: *Is waiting a form of action?*

Tabella V4.2 Griglia di valutazione della verifica di fine parte IV.

Section	Exercises	Criteria	Points
History and Literature	1–6	multiple choice (4 × 1); matching (6 × 1); two short answers (5 each: content 3, language 2)	20
Text Analysis	7–11	comprehension (6); form (4); language (4); context (3); PEE paragraph (8: content 5, language 3)	25
Language	12–16	open cloze (6); multiple choice (5); key-word transformations (6); error correction (4); translation (4)	25
Vocabulary and Reading	17–20	multiple choice (4); multiple matching (4); vocabulary (3); word formation (4)	15
Writing	21	task and content (5); organisation (3); grammar (4); vocabulary and register (3)	15
Total		mark out of ten = points ÷ 10, rounded to the nearest half (60 points = 6); the Towards the colloquio task is oral practice and is not scored	**100**

LEARNING TO LEARN

Self-assessment. Before you check your answers, rate yourself: ✓✓ I can do this well · ✓ I can do this with a little help · ✗ I need more practice. I can…

- describe Britain and the English-speaking world from 1945 to today — the welfare state, the end of empire and the Windrush generation, devolution, Brexit, the digital age — and the place of English in the world;
- explain the Theatre of the Absurd, the comedy of menace, the villanelle, postcolonial literature and writing back, magic realism, postmodernism and metafiction, climate fiction, retelling and intertextuality;
- analyse an unseen modern poem: its speaker, its form, its tone and its relation to an older text;
- use the language of the whole book — tense choice, concession, modals, absolutes, citing, connotation, represented speech, concision, pragmatics, World Englishes and data — in INVALSI- and B2-style tasks;
- compare these works with their Italian and classical counterparts — Buzzati and Pirandello, De Amicis, Calvino and Levi, Pavese; Sisyphus, Herodotus, Homer's automata, Antigone and the women of Homer;
- write a dramatic scene, a CV and covering email, a data commentary and an extended answer, and build a colloquio from a starting material.

For every ✗, go back to the chapter and to its Learning to learn box. This is the last verifica of the liceo: what you still mark ✗ is your revision plan for the weeks before the exam.

Soluzioni

1. B (Esslin, *The Theatre of the Absurd*, 1961; it is a critic's label, not Beckett's; the "Angry Young Men" was the journalists' label). (1 pt)

2. D ("Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold", l. 3; Achebe printed the lines as his epigraph). (1 pt)

3. A (it reached Tilbury from the Caribbean; its passengers gave their name to the Windrush generation). (1 pt)

4. C (a version of *Antigone*, 2004; the others retell Homer). (1 pt)

5. 1 c · 2 d · 3 f · 4 e · 5 a · 6 b. (6 × 1 pt)

6. (2 × 5 pts: content 3, language 2) *Traccia.* a Writers from the former colonies answer the stories that the colonisers told about them (Rushdie's phrase "the Empire writes back", the title of Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin's book, 1989). Achebe shows Igbo society from inside, with its laws, religion, language and proverbs, against the faceless "Africa" of *Heart of Darkness*, which he criticised in "An Image of Africa"; the District Commissioner's plan to reduce Okonkwo's story to a paragraph shows the colonial view. b In Homer women such as Penelope and Briseis are seen through the eyes of men and often silenced (Telemachus sends Penelope to her rooms, *Odyssey* I; Briseis has half a line in *Iliad* I). Writers like Atwood (*The Penelopiad*, 2005) and Barker (*The Silence of the Girls*, 2018) give them the narrative voice, to show the cost of the heroes' glory — part of a wider revisionist mythmaking (Ostriker).

7. (3 × 2 pts) a A woman at home (she wears an apron, so probably in her kitchen); she has been crying and is wiping her eyes. b Because she was exhausted from weaving all day and undoing it all night (tired arms, tight neck), because the night seemed endless, and because her husband had been away for years and she did not know where he was (any two). c Penelope's tears are real, private and come from exhaustion and loneliness; Ulysses' tears are a "gesture", a public performance to show the crowd how moved he is — and he learned it from her.

8. (4 × 1 pt) a Two stanzas, 9 and 8 lines (17 in all); the lines are very irregular in length, from six syllables (*Ulysses did this too*, l. 13) to about sixteen (l. 6). b Stanza 1: *too / do*, *night / tight / light*, *years / tears* (any two pairs); stanza 2: *antique / Greek / speak* (also *implied / cried*). c *I thought, as I wiped my eyes on the corner of my apron* (ll. 1 and 10, the second time with *And*): it frames the poem as two moments of the same thought and brings us back to the kitchen, the present, before the speaker turns to Ulysses. d Free verse with irregular rhyme: no regular metre (so not blank verse, which is unrhymed iambic pentameter) and no fixed form.

9. (4 × 1 pt) a *ancient, authentic, antique, classic, Greek* (also *in the very best tradition*): the accumulation is mock-solemn — the speaker inflates her ordinary gesture with the vocabulary of museums and dealers, half amused at herself. b "You" is general (anyone, any woman in that situation) but also the speaker and Penelope at once; the colloquial forms (*you can't keep*, *gets tight*, *simply nothing else to do*) make the epic heroine sound like a tired housewife talking to a friend. c Ironic: the phrase repeats the formal, public language of the hero, and the speaker does not believe it. d It separates true feeling from performance: Penelope's tears were real, Ulysses' were a pose; the last word gives the poem's judgement.

10. (3 pts) a A deliberate twist (2 pts): in Homer Odysseus hides his tears precisely so that the Phaeacians will not see them, so they are not a performance; Millay reads the scene ironically, as if the hero's emotion were a public gesture, to contrast it with Penelope's private weeping. (Answers that note the irony and the contrast with Homer gain full marks.) b It retells a moment of the myth from

Penelope's side and makes her experience the centre, in a modern voice, as Atwood does in *The Penelopiad* (1 pt).

11. (8 pts) *Model: Millay gives Penelope a voice by finding her in an ordinary kitchen. A modern woman wipes her eyes "on the corner of my apron" and suddenly understands that "Penelope did this too": the epic queen becomes a tired wife whose neck "gets tight" after a night at the loom. The colloquial "you" lets the two women speak as one. By contrast, Ulysses' tears are only a "gesture". Like Atwood's Penelopiad, the poem moves the centre of the Odyssey from the hero to the woman who waited, and its last word, "really", claims that her suffering was the true one.* (about 100 words)

12. 1 as (concessive *much as*) · 2 Had (inverted conditional) · 3 should (putative *should*; *would* is also acceptable) · 4 With (*with* + absolute construction) · 5 as (*try as I might*) · 6 as (*might as well*). (6 × 1 pt)

13. a risen · b claims · c wait · d gotten (BrE *got*) · e a request to close the window. (5 × 1 pt)

14. a Tired **as / though she was**, Penelope… · b The **quarrel (being) over**, Briseis… · c I **wish I had read** *Omeros*… · d The examiners **didn't let us use** phones. · e Beckett **is said to have denied** that Godot was God. · f Only when she read the poem aloud **did she understand** it. (6 × 1 pt)

15. a remembered → **remembers** (literary present). b **When they arrived** at Tilbury, the weather was… (dangling participle: the weather did not arrive). c rose **by** 2% (*rise by* + the size of the change; 100 → 102 is 2%). d they are died → **they died / they are dead**. (4 × 1 pt)

16. a *Strange as it may seem, Penelope is the real protagonist of the Odyssey.* b *The reading over, the commission asked Giulia to link the text to three subjects.* (also *When the reading was over,…*). (2 × 2 pts: 1 for structure, 1 for accuracy)

17. a A · b C · c B · d C. (4 × 1 pt)

18. Paragraph 2 — B · 3 — D · 4 — A · 5 — E (C is not needed). (4 × 1 pt)

19. a signed up · b persuaded · c banging. (3 × 1 pt)

20. a uncertainty · b surprisingly · c waiting · d original. (4 × 1 pt)

21. *Model for A (about 210 words): The data compare the number of Welsh speakers in Wales in three censuses with the share of people in Scotland who have some Gaelic skills. Overall, the two languages moved in opposite directions. The number of Welsh speakers fell steadily, from 582,400 in 2001 to 562,000 in 2011 and 538,300 in 2021, a decline of about 44,000 in twenty years; in 2021 they were 17.8% of the population aged three and over. Gaelic, by contrast, is spoken by a much smaller minority, but its share rose from 1.7% in 2011 to 2.5% in 2022 — an increase of 0.8 percentage points, to about 130,000 people. The figure is very much higher in the Western Isles, where 57.2% of people had some Gaelic skills in 2022, more than twenty times the Scottish average. It should be noted that the two censuses do not measure the same thing: the Welsh figures count people who can speak the language, while the Scottish ones include anyone with some skills, such as understanding or reading. In short, Welsh remains far more widely spoken, but Gaelic is the one whose figures are growing.* For B, see the model in chapter 14 (Writing). Marking grid: task 5 · organisation 3 · grammar 4 · vocabulary and register 3.

22. (not scored) *Traccia.* a Waiting, and the people — often women — who wait for those who go to sea or to war, and whose suffering is less told. b Greek: Penelope in *Odyssey* XIX ("I wind up tricks") and I.356–359; Italian: Pavese's Circe who becomes Penelope, or Verga's *I Malavoglia* (the family waiting for the *Provvidenza*, which sinks with Bastianazzo on board); history: emigration and the First World War, the women at home (chapter 7); science: the sea and its dangers (Aoife's marine science). c Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* (chapter 11: waiting without an object), Atwood's *The Penelopiad* or Millay (chapter 14), Owen and the memorials of chapter 7. d *Model: I'd say yes, up to a point. Penelope's waiting is not passive: she weaves and unpicks, she keeps the suitors away and protects her son. Beckett's tramps, by contrast, wait for a man who never comes, and their waiting is the absurd itself. So waiting can be an action — when, like Penelope, you choose how to wait.*