



ELAT notes for candidates

The English Literature Admissions Test (ELAT) is taken by all applicants to read English at Oxford, and all applicants to read English at Cambridge **except** those applying to the mature Colleges: Hughes Hall, Lucy Cavendish, St Edmund's, and Wolfson.

The test lasts for 90 minutes and consists of one written task. The paper includes six poems or passages from drama and/or prose, which may include fiction and non-fiction. The pieces of writing are linked by a common theme which is stated in the paper. You are asked to select any two of the pieces and write an essay which compares them.

The wording of the task will be as follows:

Select two of the passages (a) to (f) and compare and contrast them in any ways that seem interesting to you, paying particular attention to distinctive features of structure, language and style.

The names of the authors and the dates of publication are given, as is the type of prose (fiction, biography etc.). You are not expected to introduce any references to other texts or authors you have studied; marks are not awarded for evidence of wider reading.

It is important to allow plenty of time to read all the material and to plan your answer. You should not need to write for longer than one hour. All rough work should be done in your answer book and handed in, together with the question paper, at the end of the test.

The examiners will reward your ability to do the following:

- respond perceptively to unfamiliar writing of different kinds
- demonstrate skills of close reading, paying attention to the effects of structure, language and style
- construct a well-focused essay based on comparing and contrasting two passages
- write fluently and accurately.

Your ELAT score will be only one of the elements used by admissions tutors to evaluate your application.

Further information relating to ELAT can be found at:

www.admissionstesting.org/elat