



Anthea Bell Prize for Young Translators

The Anthea Bell Prize for Young Translators 2025–2026 Guide for Teachers

Welcome to the Anthea Bell Prize for Young Translators! This competition for schools was launched in 2020 by the Translation Exchange at The Queen’s College, Oxford. The competition is inspired by the work of the translator Anthea Bell OBE (1936–2018), one of the finest and most influential literary translators of the 20th and 21st centuries. Last year, in 2025, over 22,000 students took part in the competition.

Table of Contents

Our aims.....	2
Timeline for 2025–2026.....	2
Resource packs.....	2
Our approach to creative translation.....	4
Glossaries.....	4
Levels	4
Levels: <i>Ab Initio</i> Russian.....	4
Videos accompanying the resources	5
Schools in Wales.....	5
Guidance for bilingual or EAL students	5
Competition tasks	6
Next steps.....	6
Further opportunities from the Translation Exchange.....	6
Making the case for languages	7
Contact us	7

Our aims

The Queen's College Translation Exchange founded this competition to promote language learning across the UK and to inspire creativity in the classroom. By providing teachers with tools to bring translation to life, and to introduce more authentic texts into the classroom, we hope to motivate more pupils to study modern foreign languages throughout their schooling and beyond.

The competition itself will take place between February and March 2026. To make sure that this isn't a one-off event, but something that can be integrated into the year's teaching, we provide three sets of resources for MFL teachers to use in the build-up to the competition. These focus on translating poetry, fiction, and non-fiction. You can read more about our approach to developing the first set of resources in our [Oxford Education Blog post](#).

Timeline for 2025-2026

Date	Stage
September 2025	Launch of Anthea Bell Prize. Resources on translating poetry shared with all registered teachers.
November 2025	Resources on translating fiction shared with all registered teachers.
January 2026	Resources on translating non-fiction shared with all registered teachers.
Monday 2 February 2026	The competition window opens.
Friday 27 March 2026	The competition window closes.
May 2026	The winners of the competition will be announced.
June-July 2026	Certificates and book prizes will be sent to the winners and commendees.

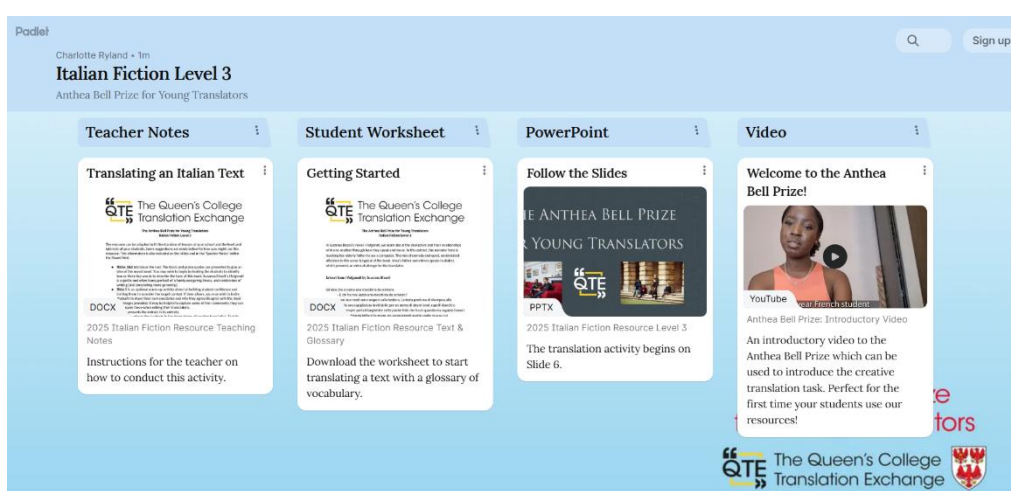
Resource packs

In the months preceding the release of the competition tasks, all registered teachers are granted access to our resource packs. The packs are dedicated to translating poetry, fiction and non-fiction, and are targeted at four Levels in six languages (French, German, Italian, Mandarin, Russian and Spanish). This includes a beginners Russian-language strand for students in KS5. French resources for Levels 1 and 2 are also available in Welsh.

Poetry and fiction resource packs generally include a PowerPoint, student worksheet, and notes for teachers. The notes for teachers suggest possible timings and ways to use the resource, but teachers should adapt resources as they see fit to suit their students' needs and their own interests. The poetry and fiction resources also include an extension activity, which could be run as a follow-up lesson or for homework.

The non-fiction resource packs, released a month before the competition tasks, are intended as practice exercises for the competition. These packs include a worksheet and notes for teachers.

Resource packs are stored in individual 'Padlets', an example of which is included below. All of these are accessible via a password-protected page on our website.

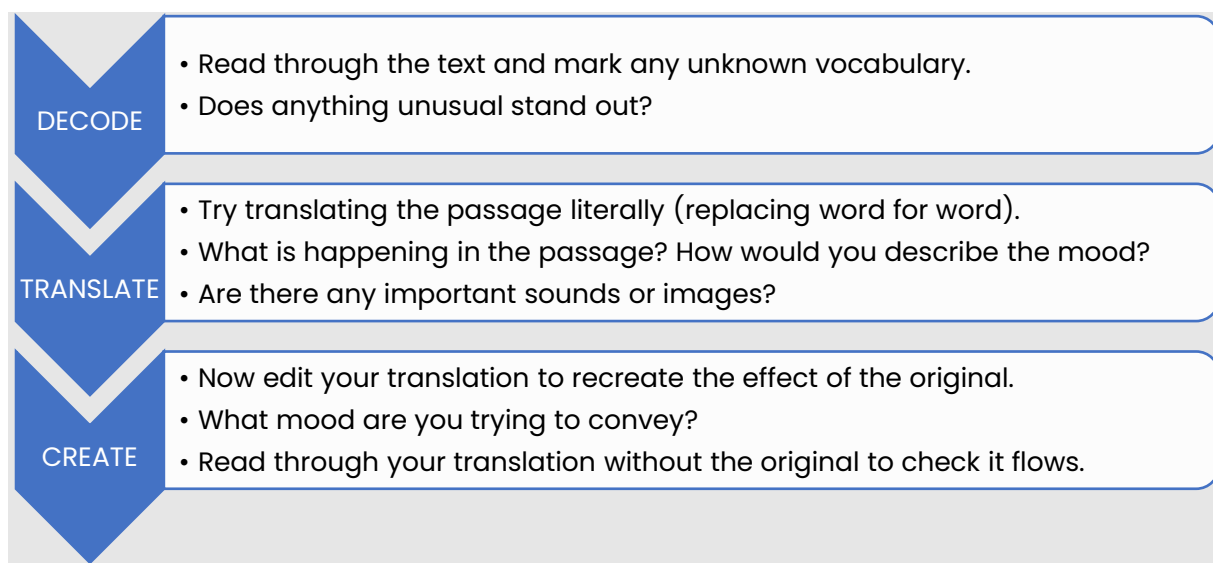


Padlet for Italian Fiction Level 3 Resource Pack

A note for teachers who have previously participated in the prize: You will be familiar with some of the available resource packs from previous years of the prize. On the resources page, we have noted the year of each new resource, including new resources for 2025–26, so that you can navigate these more easily. We are reliant on external funding for all our resources and publish new resources when funding permits.

Please note that the texts used in the resource packs are **not** the texts to be translated for the competition. The competition tasks will be shared with teachers on 2 February 2026.

Our approach to creative translation



Glossaries

We provide a glossary to accompany each translation task, both in the resource packs and the competition tasks. Words given in these glossaries are suggestions and are there to help students decode the text. Students are more than welcome to deviate from these suggestions. Teachers can encourage students to use the glossaries as a springboard to understand the text and make their own decisions about how to translate it, stressing the importance of being able to discuss and explain their choices.

Levels

Resources and competition tasks are targeted at four Levels in each language. We advise teachers to select levels according to how languages are taught in their school.

Level	Stage
Level 1	Beginning of KS3 (or first year of learning the language)
Level 2	End of KS3 (or second and/or third year of learning the language)
Level 3	KS4
Level 4	KS5

Levels: *Ab Initio* Russian

Give students a taste of a new language with our ab initio resources!

In addition to the Levels above, the Russian strand includes *ab initio* Russian, which is aimed at students in KS5 with no knowledge of Russian.

The *ab initio* Russian resources could be run:

- as a traditional lesson led by a teacher (with or without knowledge of Russian);
- as an extension or homework activity for keen linguists looking to explore new languages and perhaps thinking about picking up another language at university;
- or, could be led by students at your school who are native speakers of Russian.

No prior knowledge of Russian is required to deliver these *ab initio* resources. We include an introduction to the Cyrillic alphabet and pronunciation guidance in each resource.

Videos accompanying the resources

A video introducing the Anthea Bell Prize is included in every Padlet. We suggest showing this video the first time you use one of our resources or run a competition task with a group of students.

We have also recorded several interviews with Oxford graduates and professional literary translators to accompany Russian-language resources. These are included in all Russian-language poetry Padlets. Although these focus on Russian-language focus, contributors also discuss careers with languages and the work of literary translators more generally. As such, these videos might be of interest to teachers and students in other languages.

Schools in Wales

We run the prize for French into Welsh translation for Levels 1 & 2. You can find more information about the Anthea Bell Prize for Schools in Wales [here](#). We hope to expand this provision in the years to come.

Schools can choose to enter students for translation from French into Welsh, English, or both languages.

All registered teachers in Wales also have the opportunity to apply for new Professional Learning courses co-delivered with our sister organisation, the Stephen Spender Trust. These courses will provide teachers with inspiration and tools to integrate creative translation into their practice. Please contact us to find out more about this.

Guidance for bilingual or EAL students

We encourage students for whom one of the competition languages is their first language, or for whom English is an Additional Language, to enter the

competition. The translation task will present a different sort of challenge for these students working into English.

Competition tasks

The competition will run in schools during an eight-week window in the second half of the spring term, from Monday 2 February until Friday 27 March 2026. You can run the competition in class or you can set the competition as a homework task over the half-term break, for example. Students can work on their translation in pairs if they prefer. We ask that students receive no assistance from teachers or parents when completing the competition task.

Schools are welcome to submit entries for as many levels in as many languages as they wish, but we ask that teachers submit only the top five entries for each level in each language from each school. Entries will be submitted via an online form. Detailed submission instructions will be shared with the competition tasks on 2 February 2026.

A team of Oxford undergraduates and professional translators will judge entries to the competition. Our judges look to reward creativity, and winning entries will strike a balance between creativity and accuracy.

Area winners are selected for each level in each language. UK-wide winners and runners-up for each level in each language are selected from the area winners. A number of commendations are awarded to recognise high quality work. The full list of winners in 2025 can be found [here](#).

Next steps

After you have used any of our resources, please fill out [our feedback form](#). We always welcome feedback on our resources and any other aspects of the Anthea Bell Prize.

We are particularly keen to hear from state schools about the accessibility of our resources. The Anthea Bell Prize is informed by [Inclusive Outreach through Translation](#), a project that explores how creative translation improves inclusion in modern languages outreach.

Further opportunities from the Translation Exchange

Alongside the Anthea Bell Prize, why not start an **International Book Club** at your school? International Book Clubs are an opportunity for students to explore foreign-language literature in translation, deepening their interest in translated fiction by discovering and discussing new texts with their peers.

Taking part in an International Book Club helps students to develop critical skills, articulate their ideas and opinions, and take initiative by selecting books they are interested in. Organising and participating in a Book Club looks great on a UCAS application and is a fantastic addition to any CV!

Our [guide for teachers and sixth-formers](#) is free to download and gives tips on how to start an International Book Club at your school. Our Book Club resource bank includes reading and discussion guides for eight books. You can read one sixth-former's blog about their experience organising an International Book Club [here](#).

We are always pleased to hear about what is going on at your International Book Club or any suggestions for books that could be featured in our guides. If your students are interested in a particular language or region, we are happy to suggest suitable texts and to support with sourcing copies.

We hope to relaunch an expanded International Book Club programme for schools very soon. Watch this space!

Making the case for languages

The Translation Exchange has also produced a short video featuring Languages graduates from The Queen's College, Oxford, speaking about how their studies have enriched their lives and careers. You may wish to share this with your pupils, to show where learning a language can take you:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DjYDEp7GlqY>

Contact us

If you would like to get in touch, you can contact us by email at translation.exchange@queens.ox.ac.uk.

You can also follow us on [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Bluesky](#), and [Instagram](#).