



Anthea Bell Prize for Young Translators

The Anthea Bell Prize for Young Translators 2026–2027 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 2025–2026, over 25,000 students took part in the competition.

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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 January and March 2027. To make sure that this isn't a one-off event, but something that can be integrated into the year's teaching, we provide access to over 120 resources for Languages teachers to use in the build-up to the competition. These resources 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 2026-2027

Date	Stage
18 September 2026	Launch of Anthea Bell Prize. Resources on translating poetry shared with all registered teachers.
Early November 2026	Resources on translating fiction shared with all registered teachers.
Early January 2027	Resources on translating non-fiction shared with all registered teachers.
Monday 25 January 2027	The competition window opens.
Friday 19 March 2027	The competition window closes.
Late May 2027	The winners of the competition will be announced.
June 2027	Certificates and book prizes will be sent to the winners and commendees.

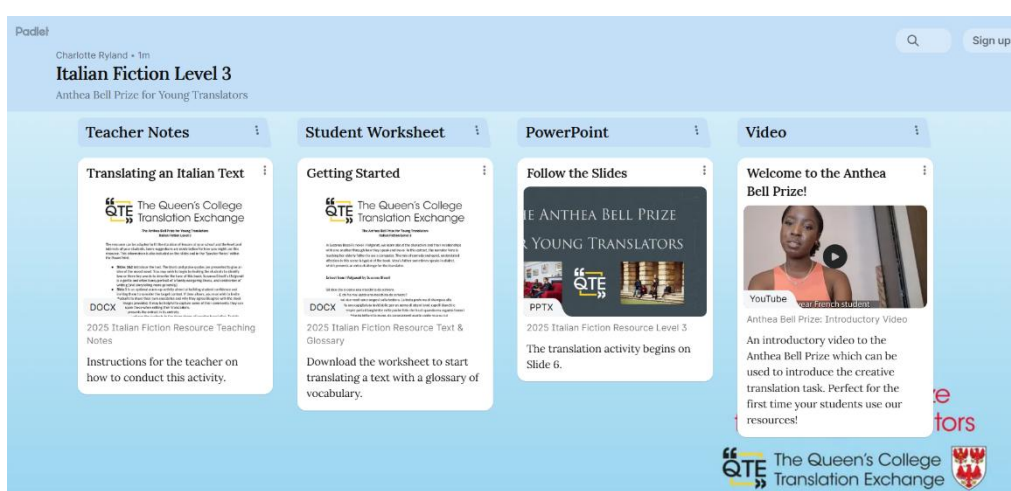
Resource packs

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. French resources for Levels 1 and 2 are also available in Welsh, as well as selected German and Spanish resources.

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 are welcome to adapt resources as they see fit to suit their students' needs and their own interests. The poetry and fiction resources often also include an extension activity, which could be run as a follow-up lesson or for homework.

The non-fiction resource packs, released several weeks 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.

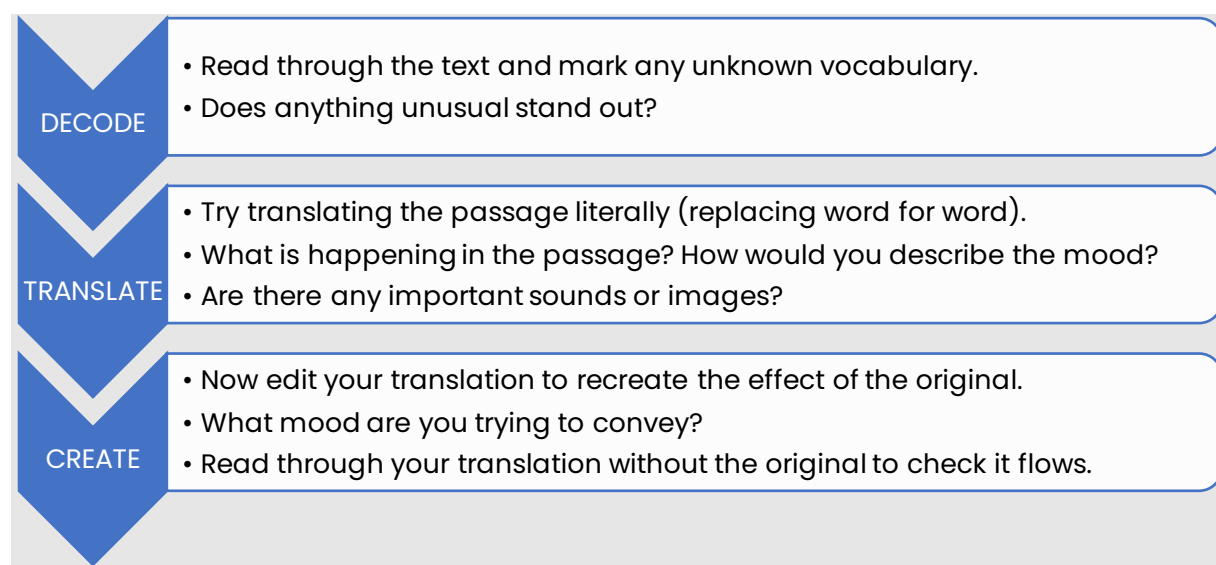


Padlet for Italian Fiction Level 3 Resource Pack

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. In our resource library, the newest resources can be found by clicking on the 'Date' dropdown and selecting '2026'. 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 25 January 2027.

Our approach to creative translation



Glossaries

We provide a glossary to accompany each translation task, both in the resource packs and with the competition tasks. Words given in these glossaries are suggestions and are there to help students decode the text. In their translations, 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.

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.

Prize Level	Equivalent	School Stage	School Stage (Scotland)	Stage of Language Learning
Level 1	Beginner	Start of KS3	S1	1 year of learning
Level 2	Intermediate	End of KS3	S2	2-3 years of learning
Level 3	Upper Intermediate	KS4	S3 / S4	4-5 years of learning
Level 4	Advanced	KS5	S5 / S6	6-7 years of learning

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, they 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 have a 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 Level 1 and Level 2, and have resources available for translating from French, German and Spanish into Welsh. You can find more information about the Anthea Bell Prize for Schools in Wales [here](#). We hope to continue expanding this provision in 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 25 January until Friday 19 March 2027. 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, but not in larger groups. 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 25 January 2027.

A team of Oxford students and professional translators will judge entries to the competition. Our judges look to reward creativity, and winning entries will strike a good 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. Commendations are also awarded to recognise high-quality work. The full list of winners in 2025–2026 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 [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), and [Bluesky](#).