

ITALIAN LITERATURE first year

The **written test** will consist of the stylistic, metrical and historical-literary analysis of a text of the Italian tradition or the writing of an argumentative essay, starting from an outline that usually poses long-term literary questions. For a more precise idea of the texts and topics proposed, you can consult the collection of [past test papers](#). The ability to place the detailed analysis of the text or literary phenomenon in its historical and cultural context will be positively assessed.

The **oral test** will consist of the reading, paraphrasing and comment on some passages from Dante's *Divine Comedy* and other classics of Italian literature and the discussion of issues of literary history, possibly extending to the European and international context. The test is designed to bring out not so much the cumulative possession of notions and information as the ability to analyse the text and to deal with problems of a historical-literary nature.

It is indispensable for candidates to prepare a selection of 30 cantos of **Dante's *Divine Comedy*** or a complete *cantica*. Candidates will be presumed to have acquired knowledge of the main authors and movements of Italian literature in their historical context from their high school textbooks, in particular the authors of the classics included in the list below.

For some of these, a complete reading and in-depth knowledge is strongly recommended (you are advised to read at least **three** of the following texts).

- Dante, *Vita nova*
- Petrarch, *Canzoniere*
- Boccaccio, *Decameron*
- Poliziano, *Stanze per la giostra*
- Machiavelli, *Il Principe* or *La mandragola*
- Ariosto, *Orlando furioso* (selection of cantos) or *Satire*
- Tasso, *Gerusalemme liberata* (selection of cantos)
- Galileo, *Dialogo sopra i due massimi sistemi del mondo*
- Goldoni, *La locandiera* or another comedy of your choice
- Parini, *Il giorno* or *Le odi*
- Alfieri, *Vita*
- Foscolo, *Le ultime lettere di Jacopo Ortis* or *Dei Sepolcri*
- Leopardi, *Canti* or *Operette morali*
- Manzoni, *I Promessi Sposi*
- Verga, *I Malavoglia*
- D'Annunzio, *Il piacere* or *Alcyone*
- Pascoli, *Myricae* or *I canti di Castelvecchio*
- Svevo, *La coscienza di Zeno*
- Pirandello, *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore* or *Il fu Mattia Pascal*
- Saba, *Antologia del «Canzoniere»*
- Ungaretti, *Allegria di naufragi*
- Montale, *Occasioni*

- P. Levi, *Se questo è un uomo*
- Morante, *L'isola di Arturo*
- Moravia, *Gli indifferenti*
- Calvino, *La trilogia degli antenati*

Also appreciated will be knowledge and direct reading of other texts, freely chosen from outside the list. The oral test may also involve other works in order to test candidates' capacity for personal critical reaction to literary texts.

*You are also advised to read in its entirety **one** text of non-Italian literature; the list that follows contains some examples, although you are entirely free to choose a text not included in the list:*

- Cervantes, *Don Chisciotte*, Part 1
- Murasaki Shikibu, *La storia di Genji*
- Shakespeare, *Amleto*
- Da Ponte-Mozart, *Don Giovanni*
- Goethe, *Il primo Faust*
- Balzac, *Le illusioni perdute*
- Baudelaire, *I fiori del male*
- Whitman, *Foglie d'erba*
- Flaubert, *Madame Bovary*
- Dostoevskij, *Delitto e castigo*
- Ibsen, *Gli spettri*
- Kafka, *Il processo*
- Woolf, *Al faro*
- Kavafis, *Poesie*
- Beckett, *Aspettando Godot*
- Garcia Marquez, *Cent'anni di solitudine*

The reading of **two** critical essays, chosen from among those proposed here below, will also be appreciated: these reading suggestions are to be understood as a spur to reflection on various literary issues rather than as test subjects.

- E. Auerbach, *Mimesis*, Einaudi 1956 (only: first part, chapters I, II, VIII, IX and second part, chapters IV, VIII, X)
- L. Blasucci, *I tempi dei Canti*, Einaudi 1996
- G. Contini, *Un'idea di Dante*, Einaudi 1970 (only *Dante come personaggio-poeta della Commedia*, pp. 33-62 of the 2001 edition)
- C. Dionisotti, *Geografia e storia della letteratura italiana*, Einaudi 1967
- G. Folena, *L'italiano in Europa*, Einaudi 1983 (only the chapter on Goldoni)
- D. Isella, *I lombardi in rivolta*, Einaudi 1984 (only *Foscolo e l'eredità di Parini*, pp. 79-102)
- G. Mazzacurati, *Pirandello nel romanzo europeo*, Il Mulino 1995
- P.V. Mengaldo, *La tradizione del Novecento. Prima serie*, Bollati-Boringhieri 1996 (only *Da D'Annunzio a Montale*, pp. 15-115)
- M. Santagata, *I frammenti dell'anima*, Il Mulino 1992
- Stussi, *Breve avviamento alla filologia italiana*, Il Mulino 2002