

READING ADVICE FOR NEW STUDENTS: 2023 ITALIAN

1) Language

Whether you have an A¹ Level or you start as a beginner, language classes in your first year will give you a firm grasp of grammar, develop your vocabulary and language skills and prepare you for the Language Preliminary Exams at the end of Trinity Term. Teaching in your first year will consist of 4 to 5 hours a week comprising Grammar and Vocabulary, Listening comprehension, Reading comprehension, Essay writing, Prose (Translation from English into Italian) and Translation from Italian into English. By your second term you will be required to read one of the narrative set texts entirely in Italian as there is no translation.

Material will be provided by the Language Tutors, who will also advise you on independent learning and weekly assignments. You will need to purchase the following grammar books prior to the start of Michaelmas Term (they will be available at Oxford Blackwell's):

Beginners:

- Required to work throughout from the Preessional throughout the first academic year: *Nuova Grammatica Pratica della Lingua Italiana*, by Susanna Nocchi (Alma Edizioni, preferably the Edizione Aggiornata latest edition 2022)
- Recommended: *The Ultimate Italian Review and Practice*, by David Stillman, second edition (McGraw-Hill, 2019): this is a good introduction but also a useful companion to consolidate and expand your knowledge of grammar and vocabulary in class and independently.

Post A-Level students:

- *Soluzioni: A Practical Grammar of Contemporary Italian*, by Denise De Rome, preferably fourth edition (Routledge, 2015).

Other texts recommended for use later in the year include:

- *Upgrade Your Italian*, by Clelia Boscolo (Hodder Education, 2005)
- *Modern Italian Grammar Workbook*, by Anna Proudfoot, second edition (Routledge, 2005)

For reference (at advanced level):

A Reference Grammar of Modern Italian, by Martin Maiden and Cecilia Robustelli (Routledge, 2007; second edition).

If you are a beginner, you may start reading some *Easy Readers* ([Easy Readers Italian](#) available at the European Bookshop in London) and work through them with a dictionary; if you studied Italian at a more advanced level you will enjoy reading the set texts in the original and other works of modern Italian literature, such as collections of short stories. We recommend that you always write down the word or phrase you've looked up in your own vocabulary notebook and go over it to consolidate what you have learnt. You should also acquire a good-sized bilingual Dictionary (such as *Oxford-Paravia* or *il Ragazzini*), also available in libraries at Oxford. The following bilingual and monolingual dictionaries are available online:

[Dizionario di italiano Sabatini-Coletti](#)
[Dizionario di Inglese Sansoni](#)
[Dizionario Garzanti Linguistica](#)
[Collins Dictionary](#)
[Dizionario dei Sinonimi e dei Contrari Rizzoli](#)
[Vocabolario della Lingua Italiana Treccani](#)
[Treccani Sinonimi e Contrari](#)

2) LITERATURE

Whether you are a beginner or a more advanced student, you must do some preparatory reading in Italian literature.

The works prescribed for the Prelims course that students study during the first term are as follows:

- 1) Primo Levi, *Se questo è un uomo*
- 2) Natalia Ginzburg, *Lessico familiare*
- 3) Giuseppe Ungaretti, *L'Allegria*
- 4) Eugenio Montale, *Ossi di seppia* (selection of 20 poems: *In limine*, *Non chiederci la parola*, *Meriggiare pallido e assorto*, *Spesso il male di vivere ho incontrato*, *So l'ora in cui la faccia più impassibile*, *Gloria del disteso mezzogiorno*, *Felicità raggiunta si cammina*, *Il canneto rispunta i suoi cimelli*, *Forse un mattino andando*, *La farandola dei fanciulli sul greto*, *Cigola la carrucola del pozzo*; and all nine poems from the section entitled 'Mediterraneo')

Texts are due to be studied in the order given above. Students should try to read three of the works before October, since there is not enough time to read them during term. Any modern paperback edition of the narrative texts will be fine (by Mondadori, Einaudi, Rizzoli etc), just ensure that the edition you work with is unabridged. Suggested editions for the poetry are as follows:

Giuseppe Ungaretti, *Vita d'un uomo: 106 poesie. 1914-1960* (Milan: Mondadori, 2016)
Eugenio Montale, *Ossi di seppia* (Milan: Mondadori, 2016)

Buon lavoro!

Francesca Southerden

francesca.southerden@mod-langs.ox.ac.uk

Fellow and Tutor in Italian, Somerville College

Lecturer in Italian at St Catherine's College and Lady Margaret Hall