

Subject: *A-Level English Literature* **Exam Board:** *AQA*



Welcome to A-level English Literature. We are delighted that you are considering this A-level as an option in Year 12 and 13. We hope you have chosen English Literature because you already have a love of reading. The course requires a commitment to class discussion, having an opinion about absolutely everything, working independently and, of course, reading. To demonstrate your commitment to the course and to prepare you for September, you must complete the following tasks to the best of your ability. The activities have been designed to help you begin to develop some of the key skills you will need for A-level English Literature and to bridge the gap between Y11 and Y12.

Please be aware that this is an essay and reading based subject and will require the reading of numerous texts and the writing of a selection of essays. We would encourage you to start the course with an excellent knowledge of poetry, prose and drama across a range of time periods.

Learning Objectives:

- To discuss the impact literature has had on your life to date and its worth as a subject.
- To share and improve your knowledge of love poetry through the ages.
- To prepare a presentation on a love poem of your choice.
- To revise and use literary terminology for the metalanguage you will need to use throughout the course.
- To understand what 'literary criticism' is and the know the key viewpoints from which texts can be interpreted.

- To think about future themes for coursework that might guide your choice of wider reading.

Contacts for Support:

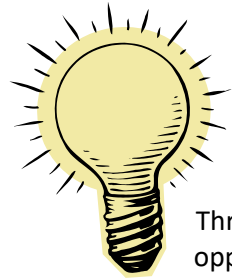
 Mrs Baldwin - baldwin@tahs.net or Teams Chat (Chat is preferred.)

What is English Literature?



English Literature's historicist approach to the study of literature rests upon reading texts within a shared context. Working from the belief that no text exists in isolation but is the product of the time in which it was produced, English Literature A encourages students to explore the relationships that exist between texts and the contexts within which they are written, received and understood. Studying texts within a shared context enables students to investigate and connect them, drawing out patterns of similarity and difference using a variety of reading strategies and perspectives. English Literature A privileges the process of making autonomous meaning, encouraging students to debate and challenge the interpretations of other readers as they develop their own informed personal responses.

Careers you can consider with English Literature A level:



Through studying English Literature you'll gain skills that are applicable to a broad range of career opportunities, including: Teaching, Public Relations, the media (publishing, journalism, advertising etc.), business and administration. You'll have learnt to read, discuss, analyse and write about a wide range of texts and to conduct independent research. These skills and competencies are recognised by employers in all fields who put a high value on people who can construct a clearly expressed argument; who can present ideas concisely, logically and clearly; who can make a critical analysis of a piece of writing; who can deal competently with a large amount of complex information and who can show initiative in conducting independent research.

Skills you will have learnt upon completion of English Literature:

We encourage students to develop their interest in and enjoyment of literature and literary studies as they:

- read widely and independently both set texts and others that they have selected for themselves
- engage critically and creatively with a substantial body of texts and ways of responding to them
- develop and effectively apply their knowledge of literary analysis and evaluation
- explore the contexts of the texts they are reading and others' interpretations of them.



In addition, A-level encourages students to develop their interest in and enjoyment of literature and literary studies as they undertake independent and sustained studies to deepen their appreciation and understanding of English literature, including its changing traditions, in an NEA (coursework essay).

Overview of lessons:

Lesson 1: Discuss reading preferences and 'the significance of 'literature' as a subject. Share knowledge of love poetry through the ages and create a timeline.

Lesson 2: Share poems about love and relationships that you have brought in with you. Create a poster about the poem and its poet, annotating ideas, language and techniques and its context.

Lesson 3: Present your poem/posters to the class. Groups then work on an unseen poetry task, identifying similarities and differences between the poems and sharing your views.

Lesson 4: What is 'Tragedy'? Researching the origins of 'Tragedy' as a dramatic form and its key features. Create a fact-file about 'Shakespearean Tragedy and its tragic heroes'.



Homework Tasks to be completed:

Task 1: Find and print/copy out one or more poems about a kind of love/aspect of relationships that you find interesting. Bring to the next session.

Task 2: Complete the poem poster ready to present next session.

Task 3: Complete the terminology table and literary criticism pages in the bridging booklet.

Task 4: This summer you need to read at least one text from each genre (novel, play, poetry). Wider reading is a core expectation of English Literature A level. Your two key areas for study are **LOVE THROUGH THE AGES and WORLD WAR ONE AND ITS AFTERMATH**. You might like to think about linking your choices to those topics. You should also try to read across a range of eras: Love in literature from Shakespeare to the present day; texts written during or shortly after WW1 OR texts written more recently about events/experiences during WW1. There is a **reading list at the end of the booklet** to aid choices but you can select texts not on this list or other texts by the listed authors. Please be ready to tell us about what you have read and prepare a poster or power point presentation on one of your choices.

Lesson 1

TO START FILL IN THIS QUESTIONNAIRE:

1. Why have you chosen to study English Literature? Explain your answer.

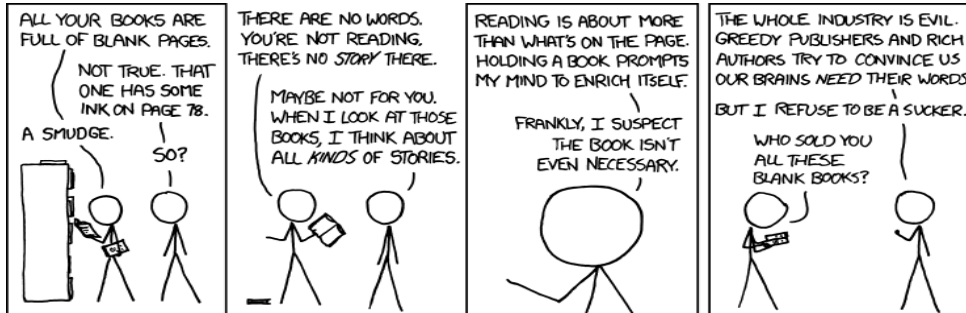
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2. What book, play or poem have you read that has had a big impact on you and why?

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3. Why do you think English Literature is worthy of study?

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Love Through The Ages

Love through the Ages is the theme of Paper 1 and the focus of Year 12. Fill in the answers to these questions to help you understand this complex theme:

1. What **images** are associated with love? Draw as many as you can think of.



2. Have these images become **over used** and lost their meaning? Explain.

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THOMAS ALLEYNE'S

Summer Bridging Work 2023

Opportunity Progress Individuality



3. Do people want different things from a relationship? Has this changed over time? Explain your ideas.

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4. Is all love poetry romantic? Do authors write about successful experiences of love, or do they draw from other things? Try to give specific examples from your reading.

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5. What different 'types' of love / relationship can you list?

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6. Does true love exist? Explain your view.

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7. What sorts of things can love make people do?

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8. Why do people write love poetry?

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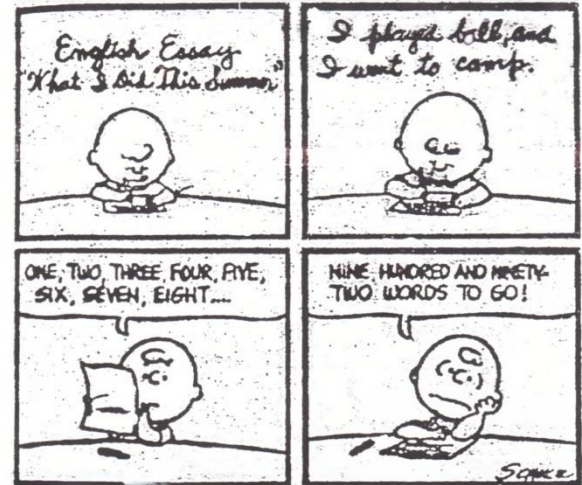
Summer Bridging Work 2023

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TASK:

Find your favourite example of a poem about, or connected to love – from Shakespeare to modern times. As a greater challenge, find a selection of poems from different time-periods and be prepared to discuss your choices in the next lesson. Print them off or copy them out. WHY HAVE YOU CHOSEN THAT POEM? Next lesson you will create a poster presentation about one poem (more if you wish) with a partner and then present your choices and interpretations to the class.

PLEASE SEE NOTE ABOUT ZIG ZAG POETRY RESOURCE LATER IN BOOKLET FOR HELP WITH THIS TASK.



BRUSH UP YOUR LITERARY TERMINOLOGY

You need to use a range of literary terms frequently and fluently in your discussions and essays. As a step up from Y11, find out the meanings to these more complex devices:

Hamartia	
Allusion	
Bathos	
Deuteragonist	
Hubris	
Intertextuality	
Sardonic	
Polemic	
Surrealism	
Vignette	

WHAT IS LITERARY CRITICISM?

Literary criticism is the comparison, analysis, interpretation, and/or evaluation of works of literature. Literary criticism is essentially an opinion, supported by evidence, relating to theme, style, setting or historical or political context. It usually includes discussion of the work's content and integrates your ideas with other insights gained from research. Literary criticism may have a positive or a negative bias and may be a study of an individual piece of literature or an author's body of work.

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Explain what these types of critical reading mean:

1. Marxist

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2. Feminist

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3. Historical

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4. Existential

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5. Psychological

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6. Post-Colonial

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7. Gender/Queer Theory

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8. Critical Race Theory

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Which one of these are you most interested in and why?.....

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READING LIST

This summer you need to read at least one text from each genre (novel, play, poetry). Wider reading is a core expectation of English Literature A level. Your two key areas for study are **LOVE THROUGH THE AGES** and **WORLD WAR ONE AND ITS AFTERMATH**. You might like to think about linking your choices to those topics. You should also try to read across a range of eras: Love in literature from Shakespeare to the present day; texts written during or shortly after WW1 OR texts written more recently about events/experiences during WW1.

THERE IS A READING LIST BELOW TO GUIDE YOUR CHOICES.

You will need to make links in some exam questions to things you have read in these wider reading texts – it is one of the assessment objectives and carries marks. Now would be an ideal opportunity to get ahead on this wider reading element. **KEEP A RECORD OF WHAT YOU HAVE READ** – TITLE/AUTHOR/GENRE/THEMES CONNECTED TO MAIN TOPIC/USEFUL EVENTS, QUOTES, DESCRIPTIONS ETC. TO REMEMBER.

FOLLOW-UP TASK: Create a PowerPoint/Poster presentation about the texts you have read. BRING THESE WITH YOU WHEN YOU START YOUR COURSE.

IN ADDITION, THERE IS A COURSEWORK ELEMENT, CALLED **THE NEA** – NON-EXAM ASSESSMENT.

There is a lot of freedom with this part of the course. AQA encourage students to select texts (in negotiation with their teacher as to suitability and rigour for A level) and to define their focus for study, creating titles and working very independently to do all the reading, research and writing that is required. This has allowed students in the past to study authors they particularly admire or genres/themes not covered in the examination texts. You could use the time to read around and start to shortlist possible texts that you might use for the NEA.

The coursework rules are:

- Compare 2 texts
- Word count 2,500 (not inc.quotes/bibliography)
- Meets all assessment objectives
- Uses academic referencing
- Two different authors
- Equal attention to each text

Possible linking topics could be:

Struggle for identity
Minds under stress/mental illness
Representations of sexuality
Obsession / jealousy /betrayal
Prejudice
Representations of women
Representations of social class / culture
Love/relationships/marriage/separation
Dislikeable characters/villains/protagonist

EXTRA CHALLENGE USING THE ZIG ZAG AQA POST 1900 POEMS RESOURCE:

A booklet has been provided with a range of modern love poems for your use. You can use these as part of your reading for the poetry task earlier in this booklet. However, you are free to research and find your own poems. Do not see this as the only material you can use. They only cover the 20th Century and you should be reading earlier literature too. In addition, there are tasks and research topics for all of the poems so if you want to investigate some poems further you have task sheets for each poem to support you. It all helps to build your wider reading knowledge and develop a curious mind!

NOTE: THE RESOURCE BOOKLET INCLUDES SUGGESTED ANSWERS. THESE CAN HELP TO GIVE YOU SOME GUIDANCE/REASSURANCE AFTER YOU HAVE HAD TIME TO THINK ABOUT THE QUESTIONS YOURSELF. TRY TO RESIST THE TEMPTATION TO JUST LOOK AT THE ANSWERS BEFORE YOU HAVE READ/EXPLORED THE POEM YOURSELF. ALSO REMEMBER THAT THERE ARE OFTEN ALTERNATIVE INTERPRETATIONS – THE ANSWER SHEET DOESN'T GIVE ALL OF THE POSSIBLE OPTIONS.

The poems have line numbers at the start of each line. It is rather annoying. But, it can help you refer to specific lines when writing about the poems.

NOVELS

Jean Rhys	Wide Sargasso Sea
Mary Shelley	Frankenstein
Charles Dickens	Great Expectations /any
Ian McEwan	Enduring Love
Pat Barker	Regeneration
Sebastian Faulks	Birdsong
Rebecca West	The Return of the Soldier
Erich Maria Remarque (translated by Brian Murdoch)	All Quiet on the Western Front (Vintage paper back edition)*
Susan Hill	Strange Meeting
Ernest Hemingway	A Farewell to Arms
Robert Graves	Goodbye to All That
Ben Elton	The First Casualty (post-2000)
Pat Barker	Life Class (post-2000)
Margaret Atwood	The Handmaid's Tale
Graham Swift	Waterland
Michael Frayn	Spies (post-2000)
Ken Kesey	One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest
Arundhati Roy	The God of Small Things
Kathryn Stockett	The Help (post-2000)
Alice Walker	The Color Purple
Jeanette Winterson	Oranges are not the Only Fruit
Alice Sebold	The Lovely Bones
Richard Yates	Revolutionary Road
Emily Bronte	Wuthering Heights
Thomas Hardy	Tess of the D'Urbervilles / Far from the Madding Crowd
George Eliot	The Mill on the Floss
Charlotte Bronte	Jane Eyre

Elizabeth Gaskell

North and South

Jane Austen

Pride and Prejudice or Persuasion

PLAYS

Arthur Miller

A View From The Bridge or The Crucible

Joan Littlewood

Oh! What a Lovely War

Peter Whelan

The Accrington Pals

Richard Curtis and Ben Elton

Blackadder Goes Forth

David Haig

My Boy Jack (post-2000)

Caryl Churchill

Top Girls

Tennessee Williams

A Streetcar Named Desire

Brian Friel

Translations

Arthur Miller

All My Sons

Timberlake Wertenbaker

Our Country's Good

Tennessee Williams

Cat on a Hot Tin Roof

Shakespeare

Much Ado About Nothing / Hamlet

Willy Russell

Educating Rita / Blood Brothers

POETRY

ed. Brian Gardner

Up the Line to Death

ed. Catherine Reilly

Scars Upon My Heart

ed. George Walter

The Penguin Book of First World War Poetry

ed. Jon Stallworthy

The Oxford Book of War Poetry

Carol Ann Duffy

Feminine Gospels (post-2000) or The World's Wife

Owen Sheers

Skirrid Hill (post-2000)

Tony Harrison

Selected Poems 2013 Edition

Seamus Heaney

New Selected Poems 1966–1987

Ted Hughes

Birthday Letters

Sylvia Plath

Ariel

Thomas Hardy

Collected works

AQA post 1900 poems

Various authors

If you need any advice or clarification on the tasks please email. You should be able to get hold of these texts cheaply at Amazon/eBay. Second-hand used texts that are clean are great value for money. Enjoy!