



# A-Level English Literature A

## Transition Booklet



Name:

## **Introduction**

Congratulations on choosing to study English at A Level. You have chosen to study a course that will not only build on the skills you already have but also encourage you to think critically and prepare you for whatever your next steps happen to be. This booklet is broken down into two key sections covering the key aspects of Literature that you might like to investigate and think about. Each section contains wider reading recommendations, possible research questions and some activities to help you make a strong start in September. Prepare to think a little differently about the world!

You will be taught by **Mr Galea** and **Ms Bouchaib**. If you have any questions regarding the course please find their email below to contact either of them.

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## **Why do Transition work?**

Preparation is crucial for studying A levels. A levels require you to be an independent learner. Although you have fewer subjects, A levels require different study skills and the volume of work is greater due to the increased demand of depth and detail. The exercises in this booklet will ensure that you are ready for the exciting challenges of becoming an A level student in September. It may be necessary to complete some of the tasks on separate sheets of paper. You have the choice of either typing or handwriting your responses. Each subject will be slightly different, but they will all require you to use the skills you will need for A level: independent enquiry; evidence of reading around the subject and enthusiasm and interest.

## **Is Transition work assessed?**

Yes. In September, your subject teacher will ask you for your Transition work and it will be assessed. Teachers will be able to diagnose your strengths and weaknesses and begin to support and challenge you in a more targeted way.

You must bring all the work with you to your first Year 12 English Literature lesson in September.

On the next page will be an outline of the A Level English Literature units you will cover in Year 12.

## **English Literature Progression**

### **A Crash Course in English Literature**

If you want to consider why we read and write, this is a quick (quite blistering) synopsis of why we study Literature: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MSYw502dJNY>

### **Course details**

In Year 12 you will study **Paper 1**. The texts include: **'The Great Gatsby by F. Scott Fitzgerald'**, **'Pre-1900 Poetry'** and **'Othello by William Shakespeare'**. Furthermore, you will spend time exploring the different literary movements from Medieval to Post Modern. Finally you will revise Paper 2.

You will be working towards the following assessments:

1. A comparative exam between 'The Great Gatsby' and 'Pre 1900 Poetry' 2.

A set text exam on 'Othello'

3. An exam on two unseen poems (knowledge of literary movements will be assessed).

This specification is linear. As a result, your final exams will be at the end of Year 13 where you will respond to both Paper 1 and Paper 2.

In Year 12 you will study aspects of **Paper 2** and the Non-exam assessment. The texts include: **'The Color Purple by Alice Walker'**, **'Feminine Gospels by Carol Ann Duffy'**, **'A Streetcar Named Desire by Tennessee Williams'** and **'Heart of Darkness by Joseph Conrad'**.

You will be working towards the following assessments:

1. A comparative exam between 'The Color Purple' and 'A Streetcar Named Desire'

2. A set text exam on 'Feminine Gospels'

3. An exam on an unseen extract.

The Non-exam assessments (coursework) will consist of you choosing a text to com

pare with Frankenstein and completing a 2,500 word essay in response to both texts.

### **Non-exam assessment - essential reading list**

#### **Taught text: Heart of Darkness by Joseph Conrad**

Aim to read as many of the texts below to best prepare yourself for your coursework in the summer term.

### **Recommended Reading**

One of the great things about English Literature courses is that they often introduce you to a wide array of amazing authors and texts. There is so much Literature that it can be bewildering to begin with. Instead of providing a comprehensive reading list, we have listed below some key suggestions for starting points of books that you might want to read, to begin gaining knowledge of wider Literature to both help your course and interests. The following books listed below will be taught on the course

1. The Color Purple by Alice Walker
2. Feminine Gospels by Carol Ann Duffy
3. A Streetcar Named Desire by Tennessee Williams
4. Heart of Darkness by Joseph Conrad
5. The Great Gatsby by F. Scott Fitzgerald
6. Othello by William Shakespeare

### **General Reading List**

It is impossible to create a fully comprehensive reading list for A Level Literature but here are a few authors and books that regularly crop up as coursework choices or on recommended reading lists:

1. The Yellow Wallpaper by Charlotte Perkins Gilman
2. The Bell Jar by Sylvia Plath
3. Wide Sargasso Sea by Jean Rhys
4. Things Fall Apart by Chinua Achebe
5. Fight Club by Chuck Palahniuk
6. 1984 by George Orwell
7. Brave New World by Aldous Huxley
8. American Psycho by Bret Easton Ellis
9. White Teeth by Zadie Smith
10. The Bloody Chamber by Angela Carter
11. A Clockwork Orange by Anthony Burgess
12. The Virgin Suicides by Jeffrey Eugenides
13. The Road by Cormac McCarthy
14. The Feminine Mystique by Betty Friedan
15. The Second Sex, Simone de Beauvoir

16. Prometheus by Lord Byron
17. Prometheus Unbound, Percy Shelley
18. A Doll's House by Henrik Ibsen
19. Beloved by Toni Morrison
20. The Story of an Hour by Kate Chopin

### **From GCSE to A Level:**

The shift from GCSE to A Level is often based upon the idea of independence. In English Literature the expectations will most likely be that you will take on a greater responsibility for your learning. What this means is that you will be having to come up with your own opinions and ideas about texts, discuss ideas without prompting and complete essays with fewer restrictions on how you approach the question compared with GCSE. You will be expected to complete work independently and quite often in advance of each lesson. You may also be required to deliver things such as short presentations and participate in seminars (discussion and debate based learning).

### **TED Talks**

You may want to also watch some TED talks on the topic of English Literature found here:

1. [https://www.ted.com/playlists/346/the\\_power\\_of\\_fiction\\_1](https://www.ted.com/playlists/346/the_power_of_fiction_1)
2. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7v-mfJMyBO0>
3. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PDgu25Dsv34>
4. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eVRU5MVYNiw>
5. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eREopphW5Bw>
6. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ctaPAm14L10>
7. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A0edKgI9EgM>

### **Activities**

#### **Section one**

Please complete any two tasks from the menu below:

<p>Create a definition sheet of 30 different linguistic and structural features.</p> <p>Choose a modern/contemporary book and write a short piece arguing for the book to be recognised as part of the literary canon.</p>	<p>Watch the performance of Othello on BBC iPlayer.</p> <p><a href="https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p089zj52">https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p089zj52</a></p> <p>Write a report explaining which 3 books you would take if you were deserted on an island and why.</p>	<p>Create a time-line of all the different movements in literature beginning with the 14th century and ending with modern literature.</p> <p>Speak to at least 5 people and record what their favourite book is and why.</p>
<p>Write an analysis of a poem of your choice, using appropriate literary terminology. Make sure you submit the poem with your analysis.</p>	<p>Watch the series of 'The Handmaid's Tale' on C4 on Demand.</p>	<p>Read the opening of Shakespeare's Othello and film yourself performing one of Iago's soliloquies.</p>

## **Section Two**

### *A Streetcar Named Desire activities*

As part of your study of English Literature, you will be asked to integrate relevant social, historical and political context in your essays (**AO3 Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received**).

1. Research Tennessee Williams- his life and the time in which he lived and produce a 300 word summary of the historical context of the play. This must be in your own words.
2. Find 2 different reviews of the play, preferably from different time periods, and read through them, particularly focusing on the portrayal of Blanche and Stanley.
3. Read Aristotle's Poetics (weblink below) and highlight the main features of a trag

edy. <http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/poetics.mb.txt> Be ready to present your ideas about what makes a perfect Aristotelian tragedy.

### **Section Three**

1. Watch [Alice Walker's interview](#) when discussing 'The Color Purple' and make notes on her intentions and thoughts on her text.
2. Complete the pre reading activities for [The Great Gatsby](#)