

English Literature

Summer work



AQA LitB

A Level English Literature

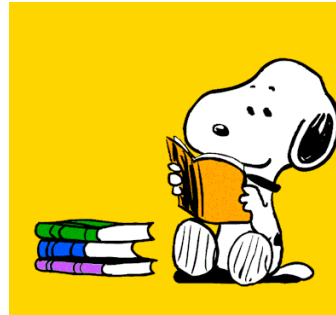
Our Year 12 set texts are:

*Shakespeare – *'Othello'*

*Drama text – *'Death of a Salesman'* – Arthur Miller

*Pre 1900 literature - **Keats Selection** – *'La Belle Dame Sans Merci'*, *'Isabella or The Pot of Basil'* *'Lamia'*, *'The Eve of St Agnes'*.

You will need your own copy of Othello and Death of a Salesman. We will provide copies of all the poems.



Pre-course preparation work.

So, you are interested in English Literature. You love reading, you love talking about the books you love, you love to be challenged and surprised and shocked and entertained... but what exactly do we all mean by literature?

Are all novels, poems and plays literature?

Are all texts worth studying?

Are some texts more important or significant?

If you are going to continue to study literature you need to understand what this means, especially as you will have the opportunity to study novels and poetry of your own choice for your NEA. You will get to choose what you want to read and write about for this unit – so how will you choose?

Task: read [The Times Literary Supplement](https://www.the-tls.co.uk/articles/what-counts-as-literature/) article “What counts as Literature?”

<https://www.the-tls.co.uk/articles/what-counts-as-literature/>

Task: carry out some independent research into the characteristics of literature.

You might want to consider:

- What is the difference between plot and narrative?
- What is the difference between complex and flat characters?
- How important are “meanings” in a text?
- How many interpretations does a text need?
- Is an interpretation valid if it was not intended?
- Which is most valuable: style, or longevity?
- Is enjoyment relevant?

Task: having carried out some research and wider reading make a list of your top 5 recommended reads for Literature. Can you justify the value of each one?



Tragedy

The focus of Year 12 is a genre study into Tragedy

Task: Watch this clip from The National Theatre “An Introduction to Greek Theatre” : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aSRLK7SogvE>

In Year 11 you may have studied Macbeth or Romeo and Juliet. Shakespeare defined these texts as tragedies. How many other tragedy texts do you know?

Task: Write a definition of Tragedy as a literary term. (You will need to do some research and can link this back to work you did in your class).

Either... Straightforward Task: read “An Introduction to Shakespearean Tragedy” by Kiernan Ryan on The British Library website.

<https://www.bl.uk/shakespeare/articles/an-introduction-to-shakespearean-tragedy>

What other research and reading does this lead to?

Or... Ambitious Task: read “Tragedy – a short introduction”.

<https://epdf.pub/tragedy-a-short-introduction.html>

Make a note of key points and any significant quotes.

What questions has this reading raised?

Task: find a definition for each of these terms:

- hamartia
- noble
- hubris
- anagnorisis
- catharsis
- fate
- myopia
- pathos
- duplicity
- malcontent
- peripeteia
- megalopsychia
- Machiavel

Can you link these terms and your wider reading to any Shakespearean tragedies you have studied?



Task: produce a piece of research of at least 2 sides A4 (in your own words) into Aristotle’s theories of Tragedy.

You are required to read at least two of the following texts:

William Shakespeare *King Lear*

William Shakespeare *Hamlet*

William Shakespeare *Richard II*

F Scott Fitzgerald *The Great Gatsby*

Tennessee Williams *A Streetcar Named Desire*

Arthur Miller *All My Sons*

Thomas Hardy *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*

Kazuo Ishiguro *The Remains of the Day*

Thomas Hardy 'A Sunday Morning Tragedy', 'At an Inn', 'Tess's Lament', 'Under the atterfall', Lament', 'Rain on a Grave', 'Your Last Drive', 'The Going', 'The Haunter', 'At Castle Boterel', 'A Trampwoman's Tragedy', 'The Frozen Greenhouse', 'The Forbidden Banns', 'The Mock Wife', 'The Flower's Tragedy', 'After a Journey', 'The Newcomer's Wife'

The Prologue of *The Monk's Tale* and *The Monk's Tale*.

You will be at an advantage if you also read at least one of these novels.

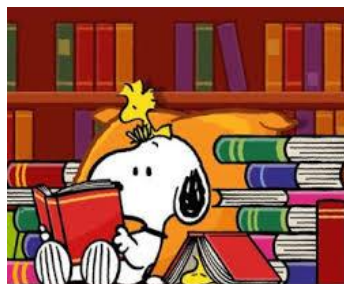
Kate Atkinson *When Will There Be Good News?*

Agatha Christie *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd*

Charles Dickens *Oliver Twist*

Graham Greene *Brighton Rock*

Ian McEwan *Atonement*



Please write a summary and keep notes of significant points and any key quotations from all of the texts you read.



**You will need to bring in your summer work to the first lesson.
Your teacher will be marking your research into Aristotle's theories of tragedy.**

This preparation work will lay the foundations for the written responses you will submit next year.

Excellent writing is characterised by:

- perceptive and assured work which shows confidence, sharpness of mind and sophistication in relation to the task.
- assuredness in the connection between contexts and the genre studied.
- rigorous engagement with how meanings are shaped by the methods used.
- precise use of literary critical concepts and terminology; mature and impressive expression.



We are looking forward to meeting you, reading great texts together, discussing a wide range of interpretations with you and reading your responses and arguments.

If you have any questions you can get in touch: jma@suttcold.bham.sch.uk

