



# **Teddington Sixth Form**

# **A Level English Literature**

## **Course Details & Transition Tasks**

## **2020-2022**

## **A level English Literature** **Exam Board –Edexcel**

You will be examined on the same skills throughout the course. Like at GCSE, there are assessment objectives that you must meet. The course is linear and is examined at the end of the GCE course.

Unlike GCSE there is a lot more independent reading and preparation required before the lesson begins to ensure you are reaching the required depth of analysis.

### **Organisation and Administration**

**Submitting work:** It is crucial that you submit work on time. If work is late, you will not receive detailed feedback and repeated inability to meet deadlines will result in compulsory supervised catch up session.

**Work:** must be submitted to your teacher on the day it is due.

**Typed work:** The deadline for essays or extended pieces is 5.30 pm. You MUST email it or you can upload it onto the Edmodo website.

**Absence from lessons:** If you miss a lesson, please ensure you photocopy any notes from your classmates and check if independent work was set.

**Equipment for lessons:** You must ensure you come fully prepared to every lesson.

You need the following things in each lesson:

- A A4 folder with file dividers for each topic
- This course guide
- Writing equipment and highlighters
- Your set texts
- Your exam practise and independent work exercise book.

### **Assessment Criteria**

Each component of your course will assess a different mixture of assessment objectives. Below is a list of the components of the course and a complete list of the texts we will be studying over the course.

## Assessment Objectives and Weightings

Students must:		% of A Level
A01	Articulate informed, personal and creative responses to literary texts, using associated concepts and terminology, and coherent, accurate written expression.	26.7
A02	Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts	26.7
A03	Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received	21.9
A04	Explore connections across literary texts	14
A05	Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations	11
<b>Total</b>		<b>100%</b>

## Course Content and Examinations

In the table below is a break down the texts you will be studying over the next two years.

Component	Studied Text	
1: Drama	Pre 1900: <i>Anthony and Cleopatra</i>	Post 1900: <i>Streetcar Named Desire</i>
2: Prose	Pre 1900: <i>Frankenstein</i>	Post 1900: <i>Handmaid's Tale</i>
3: Poetry	Pre 1900: <i>Romantics Collection</i>	Post 1900: <i>Poems of the Decade</i>
Coursework	A comparative essay themed by genre, literary movement, author or critical viewpoint – students must answer on the core text and will have to submit a thesis statement to explain their second choice.	
Suggested texts:	<i>Great Gatsby</i> F. Scott Fitzgerald	<i>The Bloody Chamber</i> by Angela Carter

You will also be required to read widely to enrich your understanding of contextual and inter-textual influences. Reading widely will ensure you demonstrate sophisticated links between texts and allow you to access the higher bands of marks.

## Examinations

You will sit external exams in A2.

The school's centre number is: 14629

Please see below for details about the content and timings for these examinations.

### A2 Examinations:

Your A2 examinations will be at the beginning of June 2022. These exams will examine you on the content you covered at AS and a new content that is combined with the old.

**Please note:** There is an modern unseen poetry element in Paper 3.

Paper	Texts required	Total marks	Time Allowed	Sections
Paper 1: Drama	Tragedy: Anthony and Cleopatra Streetcar Named Desire	60	2 hours 15 minutes	<b>Section A:</b> Shakespeare (choice) <b>Section B:</b> Post 1900(choice)
Paper 2: Prose	Science and Society: Frankenstein The Handmaid's Tale	40	1 hour	A choice of 2 comparative questions from <b><u>Science and Society section</u></b>
Paper 3 Poetry	Poems of the Decade Romantic Poetry	60	2 hours 15 minutes	<b>Section A:</b> Poems of the Decade and unseen poetry (choice) <b>Section B:</b> Romantic Poetry (choice)

Revision for these exams will take place in the summer term.

## Outline of the Course

### Course Information: Edexcel English Literature

#### Overall course components Year 12:

Component	Studied Text		
1: Drama	Pre 1900: Anthony and Cleopatra	Post 1900: Streetcar Named Desire	30% total grade
2: Prose	Pre 1900: Frankenstein	Post 1900: Handmaid's Tale	20% total grade
3: Poetry	Pre 1900: The Romantic Poets	Post 1900: Poems of the Decade	30% total grade
4: Coursework	A comparative essay themed by genre, literary movement, author or critical viewpoint – students must answer on the core text and will have to submit a thesis statement to explain their second choice. Word limit: 3000. Footnotes and bibliography required. Skills: AO1, 2, 3, 4, 5		20% total grade
Suggested texts: Gothic Genre focus	The Bloody Chamber (core)	The Picture of Dorian Gray/Jane Eyre, Dr Faustus	

## Teaching Plan

	Teacher 1 (5 Lessons)	Teacher 2 (3 Lessons)
Autumn 1	Overview of the Novel (2 weeks) Overview of the Gothic Genre Frankenstein  Skills: AO1, 2, 3, 4	Overview of Poetry (2 weeks)  Poems of the Decade  Skills: AO1, 2, 4
Autumn 2	Frankenstein  Handmaid's Tale and Overview on Dystopian/Speculative Fiction  Skills: AO1, 2, 3, 4	Poems of the Decade continued...  Connections, comparisons and critical viewpoints  Skills: AO1, 2, 4
Spring 1	Handmaid's Tale  <b><u>Mock Exams: Paper 2</u></b>  Skills: AO1, 2, 3, 4	Introduction to Dramatic Presentations: Plastic Theatre and Streetcar Named Desire <b><u>Mock Exams: Paper 1/3</u></b>  Skills: AO1, 2, 3
Spring 2	Handmaid's Tale  Skills: AO1, 2, 3, 4	Streetcar Named Desire  Skills: AO1, 2, 3
Summer 1	Comparative approaches to the novels: Science and Society  <b><u>Mock Exams</u></b>	Reviewing the exam.  <b><u>Mock Exams</u></b>
Summer 2	Coursework preparation	Coursework preparation
Summer holidays	Draft essay	

## **Textbooks and Resources Required**

- Anthony and Cleopatra by Shakespeare (The Arden version – 2009)
- Poems of the Decade: An Anthology of the Forward Books of Poetry Paperback – 19 Mar. 2015
- A Streetcar Named Desire (Modern Classics (Penguin))(Play edition) Paperback – 5 Mar. 2009
- Frankenstein by Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley - Frankenstein (Wordsworth Classics)
- The Handmaid's Tale – 12 Sept. 2005 by Margaret Atwood
- English Romantic Verse (Poets) Paperback – 30 Aug. 1973 by David Wright (Author, Editor, Introduction)
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**Please note:** You will need all your texts from year 12 as your A2 examinations review these texts.

## **Coursework**

You will be required to start writing your coursework after you have finished your AS examinations. The coursework element is worth 20% of your overall A Level grade.

The process of writing coursework will involve several drafts which will allow you to receive feedback on from your teacher if they are handed in on time.

Below is a summary of key elements of the coursework unit.

You will be supplied with the coursework marking criteria in Year 13. All of the AOs are marked and are differently weighted.

Coursework		*Code: 9ETO/04
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Internally assessed, <b>externally moderated</b></li> <li>Moderation: May 2018</li> </ul>	<b>20% of the total qualification</b>	
<p><b>Overview of content</b>            You have a free choice of two texts to study.            Chosen texts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>must be different texts</b> from those studied in Components 1, 2 and 3</li> <li><b>must be complete texts</b> and may be linked by <u>theme, movement, author or period</u></li> <li>may be selected from poetry, drama, prose or literary non-fiction.</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Overview of assessment</b>            Students produce one assignment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>one extended comparative essay</b> referring to two texts (AO1, AO2, AO3, AO4, AO5 assessed)</li> <li>advisory total word count is <b>2500–3000 words</b></li> <li>total of <b>60 marks available</b></li> </ul>		

**Submission of final coursework piece:**

All coursework must be submitted electronically by the due date **before 6.00pm.**

The coursework must be presented in the following way:

- FONT: size 12 Arial **double spaced.**
- Full name in a header on the side.
- Exam candidate number in the centre of the header.
- Page number in corner of the header.
- Word count stated clearly at the end of the essay
- Bibliography at the end of the essay with all sources clearly referenced.

**Wider Reading and Independent Learning**

**Aim to read as many classic texts from the literary cannon as you can:**

*The Book of Genesis* – the Holy Bible  
*Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley  
*Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Bronte  
*Rebecca* by Daphne du Maurier,  
*Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* by R.S. Stevenson  
*Brave New World* – Aldous Huxley  
*1984* – George Orwell  
*The God of Small Things* – Arun Dhati Roy  
*History of the World*– Julian Barnes

*Madame Bovary* – Gustave Flaubert  
*The Sign of Four* – Arthur Conan Doyle  
*A Passage to India* – E. M. Forster  
  
*The Country Wife* – William Wycherley  
*Mayor Barber* – G.B Shaw  
*Journey's End* – R.C Sheriff  
*Waiting for Godot* – Becket

## At least two modern classics written after 1945:

The World and His Wife by Carol Ann Duffy,  
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*  
Richard Yates *Revolutionary Road*  
*Wool* by Hugh Howie

## Transition Tasks

### Task 1

It is important you have some idea of the chronology of key Literature texts and their authors.

In the student shared area, find the folder Introduction to A level Literature.



4500-an-introduction  
-to-writers-and-their-

#### Step 1: Find the worksheet

This gives you a list of some of the greatest writers of English Literature in chronological order. Print out, and for each writer, include the name of a famous work they have written and a quotation. Do this in the right hand box.

Now pick out three writers that interest you and research at least one key work of theirs. In your research document, include: a summary of the key text you have chosen; a summary of why this text is considered a significant contribution to the English Literary tradition; what key literary features the writer has used in his poem/drama/novel.



4515-an-introduction  
-to-writers-and-their-

#### Step 2:

Work out who the author is from the description. Test your knowledge of the literary canon!



4516-an-introduction  
-to-writers-and-their-

#### Step 3:

Print out these passages and identify who wrote them. Annotate the four texts that most interest you and write a brief commentary on your chosen extracts.

## **Task 2:**

Literature involves interpreting the value of a text based on your own views and confidently developing your own interpretations.

### **Read one of the following texts.**

A Thousand Splendid Suns by K Hosseini  
Atonement by I McEwen  
Behind the Scenes at the Museum by K Atkinson  
Beloved by T Morrison  
Captain Corelli's Mandolin by L de Bernieres  
Never Let Me Go by K Ishiguro  
1984 by G Orwell  
One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest by K Kesey  
The Colour Purple by A Walker  
The Kite Runner by K Hosseini  
The Road by C McCarthy  
Things Fall Apart by C Achebe  
White Teeth by Z Smith

a) As you read your text, keep notes on the protagonist, antagonist, the plot, settings, chronology.



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ic-plots.pdf

b) Refer to the following worksheets in the student shared area:

c) Now write about your text in response to the question:

Explore the ways in which ideas about the human condition are explored in....(your text). Your response should be about 1000-2000 words in length and explore the writer's intentions, methods and effects and contexts. You should include a careful analysis of how the novel begins, ends and one other key moment in

**Task 3:**

It is important to be able to write thoughtfully about poetry texts, considering the ways ideas are conveyed.

**Read Cold Earth Slept below and print out and complete the work sheet on it.**

The poem and worksheet can be found in the Student Shared area English.

**Task 4:**

Drama: read the opening speeches from Dr Faustus by C Marlowe.

**How is the protagonist presented by the Chorus and by the protagonist's opening speech? Write a response with detailed analysis.**

You will find the speech in the Student Shared area for English.

You will need to summarise what the play is about, then explain how Dr Faustus is presented. Use Spark Notes or LitCharts to help you do so.

# Doing English - Literary Critical Practices

Professor Robert Eaglestone discusses what the discipline of English involves and what it means to adopt its practices.

To answer the question, 'Why read criticism in English Literature A Level?', compare English with other subjects. In maths, you don't learn off by heart the answers to all the problems (that would be mad and impossible): you learn methods to solve problems. Similarly, in geography, you don't learn everything on a map: you learn to think like a Geographer. At school, you learn not so much facts as ways of thinking about things in the world. And to think in a certain way is to be in a certain way, so really you are learning an identity as a something: as a Geographer, as a Historian. Or, as some year 13s said to me, as an 'Englischer'. Although it's a surprisingly controversial name, you are learning to think as, to be, a literary critic. If it's not about just knowing facts about literature, what does it mean to think as, to be, a literary critic?

Actually, as soon as you walked through the door of the A Level classroom you became a literary critic.

All educational disciplines grew from very basic human activities. Geometry means 'measuring the earth', presumably vital for early farming societies. Chemistry grew from cooking and making clothes (dyes and suchlike). Literary criticism comes from listening to stories and poems or watching dramas and then asking questions and talking about them.

One of the things that's weird about English, and unlike other subjects, is that while I've read that poem a hundred times, and you've read it for the first time today, we've both got interesting things to say about it. In a discussion, one person can't just bulldoze another with knowledge (because knowing about a poem doesn't really mean 'knowing facts about a poem').

Every subject is made up of the questions it asks of the material it has chosen as its subject: originally practical questions (chemistry: what to mix together to make red dye) then, slowly, more abstract questions. And thinking as a literary critic involves just that: knowing what sort of questions to ask, what sort of ideas to use. But just as chemistry has changed and developed over the ages, so has literary criticism. However, its modern form is only just over three or four generations old, so even though it has changed, it's still about engaging with texts and asking questions.

I'm not going to tell you precisely what questions literary critics ask. It's not as simple as that. Finding out yourself means you'll understand and own the questions more fully. I can do something better, however. I can tell you where the questions come from.

## Where Literary Critical Questions Originate

The questions we ask of literary texts are the same deep questions we ask everyday of ourselves and of the people around us. Literary texts are the closest sort of things to us. They are in language. Each of us is an expert user and creator of language. Every day we use words to express ourselves, tell stories and make patterns out of our reality. That means we judge, shape and think about language all the time, so much so that we often just forget we are doing it. Thinking as a critic both reminds us of that and, more importantly, uses that fact. Criticism is about how we use language.

## Narratives

Literary texts also have stories. Each of us, in the stories we tell, is a skilled author and weaver of narrative. Just as we judge the stories our friends, we can all judge a novel by the high standards of our own everyday stories. We do this all the time, too. Criticism is also about what we use language for. And because it takes longer to read a novel than it does to see a film or to listen to a piece of music, or to play most games, and because novels demand more time and energy, they are more immersive. This is the origin of phrases like 'losing yourself in a book' or 'the book speaks to me', as if a novel was more than just ink on a page or words on a screen. We live in novels more than in any other art form and after reading them they stay with us. I call this the 'after-reading'. Criticism is about what language does to us.

This closeness between literary texts and us means that the questions that critics ask about literary texts are the same questions we ask ourselves. That's why English is so risky. When we read or talk about a text, we are risking ourselves - risking exposing ourselves. Sometimes people say that analysing a poem kills it. But they never say, 'Oh, you are killing this landscape by doing geography all over it' or 'that maths is butchering my enjoyment of numbers'. Actually, if you allow yourself to ask the really important questions of texts, far from being dull, the questioning reaches into the heart of who you are and your own identity.

## A Process of Critical Thinking

Learning to think as a critic is a process: I'd say there were six steps. (In real life these all ooze into each other, so breaking it down like this is just to help us think about it.)

First, you'll always begin with your own initial response to the text. This could be enthusiastic or interested or even negative: whichever it is, you should think about why you responded like that.

Second, it's important to listen carefully to the responses of your friends and other people in your group. Somebody else may have seen something that you missed or may have a very different take on the text. When I read Mary Shelley's novel *Frankenstein*, I felt sorry for the poor monster; my classmates didn't at all. Criticism you read can be a bit like this too: different points of view that make you think.

Third, you could begin to respond to 'soundbites' about the text: short ideas or suggestions that illuminate it. You might come up with some initial ideas from looking at an online guide to the author or a relevant critical essay. Actually, essay titles are very often 'soundbites' which exist to make you think. So, a good 'soundbite' for Frankenstein might be from the ancient Greek philosopher, Aristotle: 'to live outside society you must be a god or a beast'. Victor Frankenstein, who makes the monster, alone in his lab, away from everyone, is like a god, creating new life: the monster, also alone and isolated, becomes a beast. (Discuss!)

The fourth step would be to read essays or reviews of the text. Just like you, these critics will have ideas and points of view that will guide their response and you can begin to ask what 'position' each critic is writing from. For example, one critic, Franco Moretti, writes that the

*monster is denied a name and an individuality. He is the Frankenstein monster; he belongs wholly to his creator (just as one can speak of 'a Ford worker'). Like the workers, he is a collective and artificial creature. He is not found in nature, but built...*

Moretti points out that the monster is made of the bodies of the poor, reshaped and given an identity by modern science and industry. He's obviously a critic with an interest in politics and history, and how it shapes literary work and its contexts.

In the fifth stage, rather than reading a critic who develops their own ideas, you could yourself explore different critical positions on the text (you could think of yourself as a feminist critic, say, or one who is interested in the ethical or political issues in a text). Arguing from a certain position can be very revealing, and it also involves discovering something about the critical approaches themselves. (You will probably have begun to think about these approaches in step four.)

The final step is when a critical position is one that you 'own', when a set of ideas becomes part of your 'literary critical' toolkit, always ready to hand. This sixth stage, leads back, of course, to the first stage; only now your initial response will be much more informed and analytical.

Why is it important to think about the processes of literary critical activity and understand more about them?

John Hattie, an expert in education, undertook a huge 'study of studies', covering some 80 million (!) students over many years. He argues that what improves a student's work most is what he called 'metacognition', by which he means, roughly, knowing what you are doing. In English, this means that the thing that helps you to do best most is not (just) knowing the texts but knowing what you are doing with them and why. Knowing why you are reading criticism is, perhaps, as important as reading criticism itself.

**Staff Information:**

If you have a question about the course or need to catch up on work, please contact your teacher in the first instance.

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