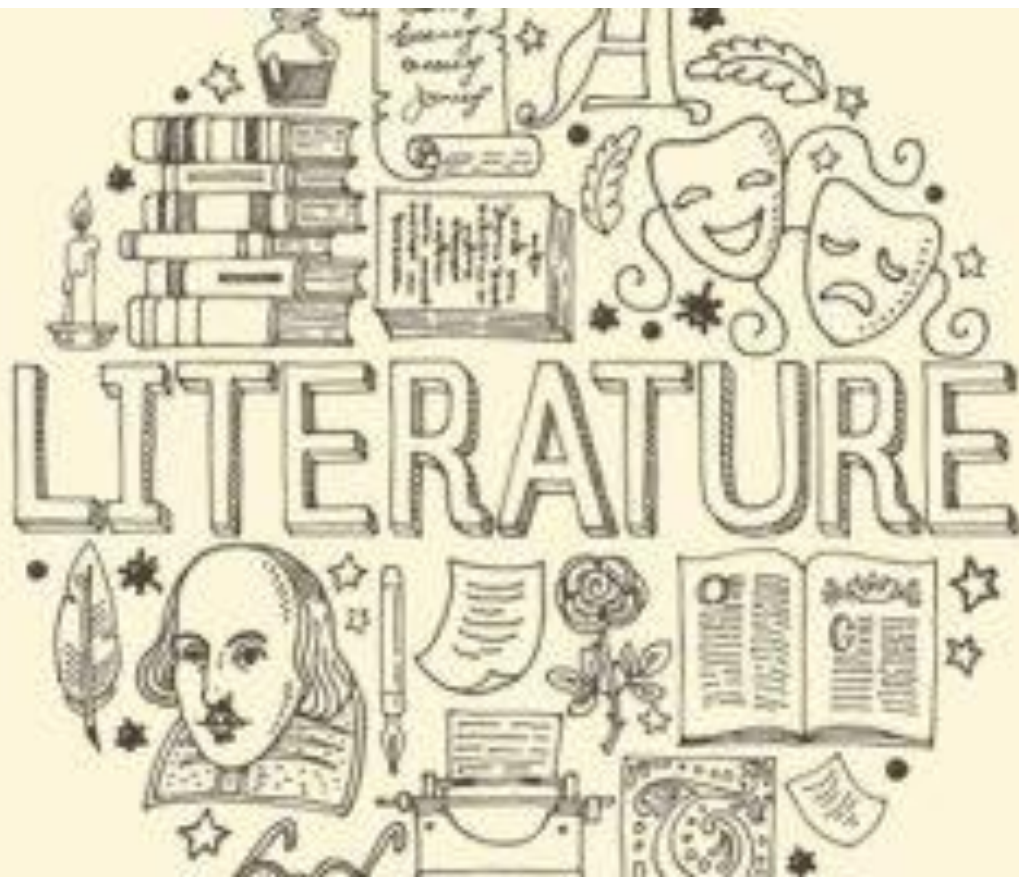


# A Level English Literature Transition Booklet



This pack contains information about A Level English Literature and a programme of activities and resources to prepare you to start an A Level in English Literature in September. Please use this during the summer term and the summer holidays to prepare for your A Level course.



## **Please note the compulsory summer work which starts on page 3**

**About the course:** The specification we teach is produced by Edexcel. The unit code is 9ET0 (A level) and a full copy of this specification and other useful information is available at:

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/A%20Level/English%20Literature/2015/Specification%20and%20sample%20assessments/GCE2015-A-level-Eng-Lit-spec-Issue-6.pdf>

The course consists of four components:

**Component 1: Drama** – Shakespeare’s *King Lear/Hamlet* and *A Streetcar Named Desire* by Tennessee Williams

**Component 2: Prose** - Comparison of *The Handmaid’s Tale* by Margaret Atwood and *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley

**Component 3: Poetry** – *Poems of the Decade*, unseen poetry and *John Donne*

**Component 4: Non-examination assessment** – *Birdsong* by Sebastian Faulks and *Wilfred Owen’s War Poetry*

Across your study of the four components, you will be assessed on:

**AO1** Articulate informed, personal and creative responses to literary texts, using associated concepts and terminology, and coherent, accurate written expression

**AO2** Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts

**AO3** Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received

**AO4** Explore connections across literary texts

**AO5** Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations

Examination:

You will have four components of assessment as outlined below.

- 1. Drama:** written exam: 2 hours 15 minutes, two questions, 60 marks
- 2. Prose:** written exam: 1 hour 15 minutes, one question, 40 marks
- 3. Poetry:** written exam: 2 hours 15 minutes, two questions, 60 marks
- 4. Non-examination assessment:** 3000 words, 60 marks

## Compulsory Summer Work

### Task 1:

For your Prose study starting in September, you will be required to conduct research into the contextual background of the two texts – *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley and *The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood. Please research the following areas and compile your notes in an appropriate form.

#### **Part 1: Romanticism and The Gothic**

- 1) What were the precursors to Gothic Literature?
- 2) What were the main themes and setting of Gothic Literature?
- 3) The life of Mary Shelly
- 4) The trip to Geneva by Lord Byron and Joh Polidori
- 5) The Prometheus Myth

#### **Part 2: Dystopian Literature**

- 1) What are the definitions of Dystopian Fiction and Speculative Fiction?
- 2) What are the main themes, ideas, settings and characters of Dystopian Fiction?
- 3) The life of Margaret Atwood
- 4) The themes of *The Handmaid's Tale*
- 5) The meaning of Feminist Literature

Please use the websites stated at the back of the booklet to help you with this task.

## **Task 2: Poems of the Decade Anthology – First Responses**

Search online for the following poems from the Poems of the Decade Anthology. For each poem, write down:

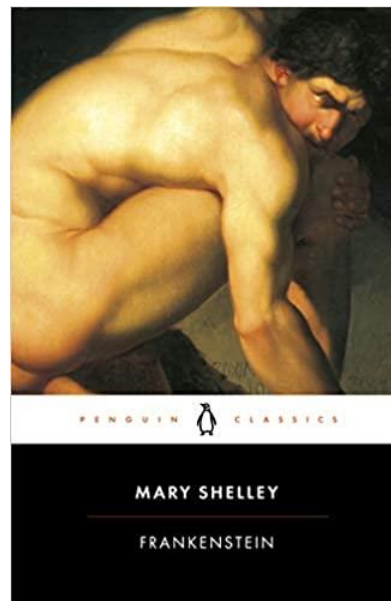
- What you think the poem is about.
- What you believe are the main themes and ideas.

- 1) Eat Me by Patience Agbabi
- 2) Chainsaw Versus the Pampas Grass by Simon Armitage
- 3) Material by Ros Barber
- 4) History by John Burnside
- 5) An Easy Passage by Julia Copus
- 6) The Deliverer by Tishani Doshi
- 7) The Lammas Hireling by Ian Duhig
- 8) To My Nine-Year-Old Self by Helen Dunmore
- 9) A Minor Role by U A Fanthorpe
- 10) The Gun by Vicki Feaver
- 11) The Furthest Distances I've Travelled by Leontia Flynn
- 12) Giuseppe by Roderick Ford
- 13) Out of the Bag by Seamus Heaney
- 14) Effects by Alan Jenkins
- 15) Genetics by Sinéad Morrissey
- 16) From the Journal of a Disappointed Man by Andrew Motion
- 17) Look We Have Coming to Dover! By Daljit Nagra
- 18) Please Hold by Ciaran O'Driscoll
- 19) On Her Blindness by Adam Thorpe
- 20) Ode on a Grayson Perry Urn by Tim Turnbull

**Task 3:**

To commence your studies, you will need to purchase your own copies of the texts for study. This is to ensure you are able to annotate them independently. Please purchase and read the following two books - *The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood and *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley.

After reading each book, write a 200- word review of each, to express your opinion on what you liked and disliked about the characters, themes and narrative.



## Reading List

Below are the set texts for your study of English Literature in Year 12. We strongly suggest that you purchase and read the texts in advance of commencing the course in September.

Title	Author	ISBN	Where to purchase
The Handmaid's Tale	Margaret Atwood	978-1784873189	<a href="https://www.amazon.co.uk/Handmaids-Tale-Vintage-Classics/dp/1784873187/ref=sr_1_3?dchild=1&amp;keywords=the+handmaids+tale&amp;qid=1621203140&amp;sr=8-3">https://www.amazon.co.uk/Handmaids-Tale-Vintage-Classics/dp/1784873187/ref=sr_1_3?dchild=1&amp;keywords=the+handmaids+tale&amp;qid=1621203140&amp;sr=8-3</a>
Frankenstein	Mary Shelley	978-0141439471	<a href="https://www.amazon.co.uk/Frankenstein-Modern-Prometheus-Penguin-Classics/dp/0141439475/ref=sr_1_3?dchild=1&amp;keywords=frankenstein&amp;qid=1621203365&amp;sr=8-3">https://www.amazon.co.uk/Frankenstein-Modern-Prometheus-Penguin-Classics/dp/0141439475/ref=sr_1_3?dchild=1&amp;keywords=frankenstein&amp;qid=1621203365&amp;sr=8-3</a>
Poems of the Decade	Various	978-0571325405	<a href="https://www.amazon.co.uk/Poems-Decade-Anthology-Forward-Poetry/dp/0571325408/ref=tmm_pap_watch_0?encoding=UTF8&amp;qid=1621203481&amp;sr=8-1">https://www.amazon.co.uk/Poems-Decade-Anthology-Forward-Poetry/dp/0571325408/ref=tmm_pap_watch_0?encoding=UTF8&amp;qid=1621203481&amp;sr=8-1</a>
A Streetcar Named Desire	Tennessee Williams	978-1408106044	<a href="https://www.amazon.co.uk/Streetcar-Named-Desire-Student-Editions/dp/1408106043/ref=sr_1_1?crd=1B4VEPE18V04Y&amp;dchild=">https://www.amazon.co.uk/Streetcar-Named-Desire-Student-Editions/dp/1408106043/ref=sr_1_1?crd=1B4VEPE18V04Y&amp;dchild=</a>

			<a href="#">1&amp;keywords=a+streetcar+named+desire&amp;qid=1621203569&amp;srefix=a+streetcar+%2Caps%2C179&amp;sr=8-1</a>
Birdsong	Sebastian Faulks	978-1784700034	<a href="https://www.amazon.co.uk/Birdsong-Sebastian-Faulks/dp/1784700037/ref=sr_1_1?crid=2M4NDG0PJJILS&amp;dchild=1&amp;keywords=birdsong+sebastian+faulks&amp;qid=1621203757&amp;srefix=birdson+%2Caps%2C182&amp;sr=8-1">https://www.amazon.co.uk/Birdsong-Sebastian-Faulks/dp/1784700037/ref=sr_1_1?crid=2M4NDG0PJJILS&amp;dchild=1&amp;keywords=birdsong+sebastian+faulks&amp;qid=1621203757&amp;srefix=birdson+%2Caps%2C182&amp;sr=8-1</a>
Wilfred Owen – War Poems	Wilfred Owen. Ed. John Stallworthy	978-0701161262	<a href="https://www.amazon.co.uk/Poems-Wilfred-Owen-Owen-Paperback/dp/B00GOHB1CE/ref=sr_1_7?crid=1UZFE6FCE5YG4&amp;dchild=1&amp;keywords=wilfred+owen+war+poems&amp;qid=1621203848&amp;srefix=wilfred+owen+war+%2Caps%2C168&amp;sr=8-7">https://www.amazon.co.uk/Poems-Wilfred-Owen-Owen-Paperback/dp/B00GOHB1CE/ref=sr_1_7?crid=1UZFE6FCE5YG4&amp;dchild=1&amp;keywords=wilfred+owen+war+poems&amp;qid=1621203848&amp;srefix=wilfred+owen+war+%2Caps%2C168&amp;sr=8-7</a>

## Wider Reading List

### Poetry:

18th/19th centuries. Some poets worth getting to know:

Alexander Pope, P.B. Shelley, G.M.Hopkins, Lord Byron, John Keats, Elizabeth

Browning, William Blake, Lord Tennyson, Christina Rossetti, W.Wordsworth, Robert

Browning, Walt Whitman



20th century:

Wilfred Owen, Dylan Thomas, Robert Frost, Seamus Heaney, T.S. Elliot, R.S.

Thomas, Sylvia Plath, W.B. Yeats, Philip Larkin, Douglas Dunn, W.H. Auden, Ted

Hughes, Tony Harrison, Louis MacNeice, Stevie Smith, Simon Armitage, Stephen

Spender, Derek Walcott, Liz Lochhead, Thomas Hardy, Ezra Pound, e e cummings,

Langston Hughes, Carol Ann Duffy, Allen Ginsberg

### **Drama:**

Shakespeare's time: Shakespeare! Marlowe, Jonson, Webster

19th century: Wilde, G B Shaw (spans both centuries)

20th century: Brian Friel, Harold Pinter, Caryl Churchill, Sean O'Casey, Arnold

Wesker, Alan Bennett, John Osborne, John Arden, Alan Ayckbourn, Samuel

Beckett, Arthur Miller, Tom Stoppard, Sam Shepherd, Tennessee Williams

### **Classic Prose:**

Thomas Hardy – Jude The Obscure, Tess of the D'Urbervilles

W.M. Thackeray - Vanity Fair

Charles Dickens – Great Expectation, Oliver Twist, Nicholas Nickleby

Charlotte Bronte - Jane Eyre

Emily Bronte - Wuthering Heights

George Elliot – Middlemarch, Silas Marner

Henry Fielding - Tom Jones

Elizabeth Gaskell - Mary Barton etc.

Jane Austen – Emma, Pride and Prejudice

Mark Twain - Huckleberry Finn

Mary Shelley – Frankenstein

Bram Stoker – Dracula





Robert Louis Stevenson – Treasure Island, Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde

Daniel Defoe – Robison Crusoe

Anthony Trollope – The Way We Live Now

Arthur Conan Doyle – The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes etc.

## **20<sup>th</sup> Century Literature**

Arnold Bennett - The Old Wives' Tale

Joseph Conrad - Heart of Darkness

E.M. Forster - Where Angels Fear to Tread, Howards End

D.H. Lawrence - Sons & Lovers

James Joyce - Portrait of the Artist

Scott Fitzgerald - The Great Gatsby

Virginia Woolf - Moments of Being

Edith Wharton - The Age of Innocence

Graham Greene - Power & the Glory, Brighton Rock

George Orwell – 1984, Animal Farm

John Steinbeck - The Grapes of Wrath

Ernest Hemingway - For Whom the Bell Tolls

Evelyn Waugh - Brideshead Revisited, The Sword of Honour Trilogy

William Golding – The Lord of the Flies

Jack Kerouac – On the Road

John Le Carre – Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy

Kingsley Amis - Lucky Jim

Ian McEwan - Atonement

Alice Walker - The Colour Purple

Paul Scott - Staying On

Joseph Heller - Catch 22



Margaret Drabble - The Millstone

Fay Weldon - Life & Loves of a She-Devil

John Fowles - The French Lieutenant's Woman

Margaret Atwood - The Handmaid's Tale

Nick Hornby – High Fidelity, Fever Pitch, About A Boy, Juliet, Naked

Tony Parsons – Man and Boy

J R Tolkien – The Lord of the Rings

C S Lewis – The Screwtape Letters

John Boyne – The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas

Aldous Huxley – Brave New World

Russell Hoban – Riddley Walker

Jonathan Franzen – The Corrections

Paul Auster – The New York Trilogy, Leviathan, The Book of Illusions

Truman Capote – In Cold Blood

Ken Kesey – One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest

William Burroughs – Naked Lunch

**Literature from other cultures: \*indicates pre-1914 texts**

Khalid Hosseini - A Thousand Splendid Suns, The Kite Runner (Afghanistan)

Chinua Achebe - Things Fall Apart (Africa)

H Rider Haggard – She (Africa)

Homer - The Iliad\*, the Odyssey\* (Ancient Greek)

Doris Pilkington - The Rabbit Proof Fence (Australia)

Jung Chang - Wild Swans (China)

Victor Hugo - Les Miserables\* (French)

Gustave Flaubert - Madame Bovary\* (French)

Alexandre Dumas – The Three Musketeers, The Count of Monte Cristo (French)



Yann Martel - Life of Pi (India)

Arundhati Roy - The God of Small Things (India)

Salman Rushdie - Midnight's Children (India)

Roddy Doyle - Paddy Clarke Ha Ha Ha (Ireland)

Arthur Golden - Memoirs of a Geisha (Japan)

Chimamanda Ngozie Adichie - Purple Hibiscus, Half of a Yellow Sun (Nigeria)

Feodor Dostoevsky - Crime & Punishment\*, The Brothers Karamazov\* (Russia)

Leo Tolstoy - War & Peace\* (Russia)

J.M. Coetzee – Disgrace (South Africa)

Carlos Ruiz Zafon – Shadow of the Wind (Spain)

Gabriel Garcia Marquez - Chronicle of a Death Foretold (Spain)

Stieg Larsson - The Girl With The Dragon Tattoo (Sweden)

Alex Garland - The Beach (Thailand)

### **Graphic Novels:**

Alan Moore – Watchmen, V for Vendetta, The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen, Batman:

The Killing Joke, From Hell

Frank Miller – 300, The Dark Knight Returns, Batman: Year One

Harvey Pekar – The American Splendour Series

Daniel Clowes – Ghost World

**Journals and magazines** are a good way of keeping up to date. You can subscribe for a year or buy individual editions. We recommend:

Literary Review - <https://literaryreview.co.uk/>

English Review - <https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/englishreview>



It will help you to be aware of current global events that are related to the texts you will be studying; so watch/read the news each week.

- [www.google.co.uk/alerts?hl=en](http://www.google.co.uk/alerts?hl=en)
- [www.bbc.co.uk](http://www.bbc.co.uk)
- [www.theguardian.com/uk](http://www.theguardian.com/uk)

***There are many relevant films and books – a small selection:***

<b>Films and visual resources</b>
The Handmaid’s Tale – Season 1 Frankenstein, 1994, Dir. Kenneth Branagh A Streetcar Named Desire, 1959, Dir. Elia Kazan Hamlet, 1996, Dir. Kenneth Branagh King Lear, 2018, Dir. Richard Eyre

### **Possible summer activities and trips**

1. Visit the RSC in Stratford-upon-Avon or Shakespeare’s Globe in London to watch a production.
2. Visit local and national libraries such as the Library of Birmingham

### **Expectations and Workload**

We are delighted you have chosen to study English Literature. You can expect well-planned and resourced lessons delivered by teachers who genuinely want to see you achieve your potential. In return we expect you to arrive promptly and properly equipped to all lessons. You will also be expected to use your private study time in an organised and effective way to supplement and reinforce what you have learnt in class. **Simply turning up to most of the lessons will not be enough to secure your target grade.** The work you do outside of your lessons will have a very significant impact on your results. Above all else, we expect you to display *enthusiasm* and *passion* for English Literature.

