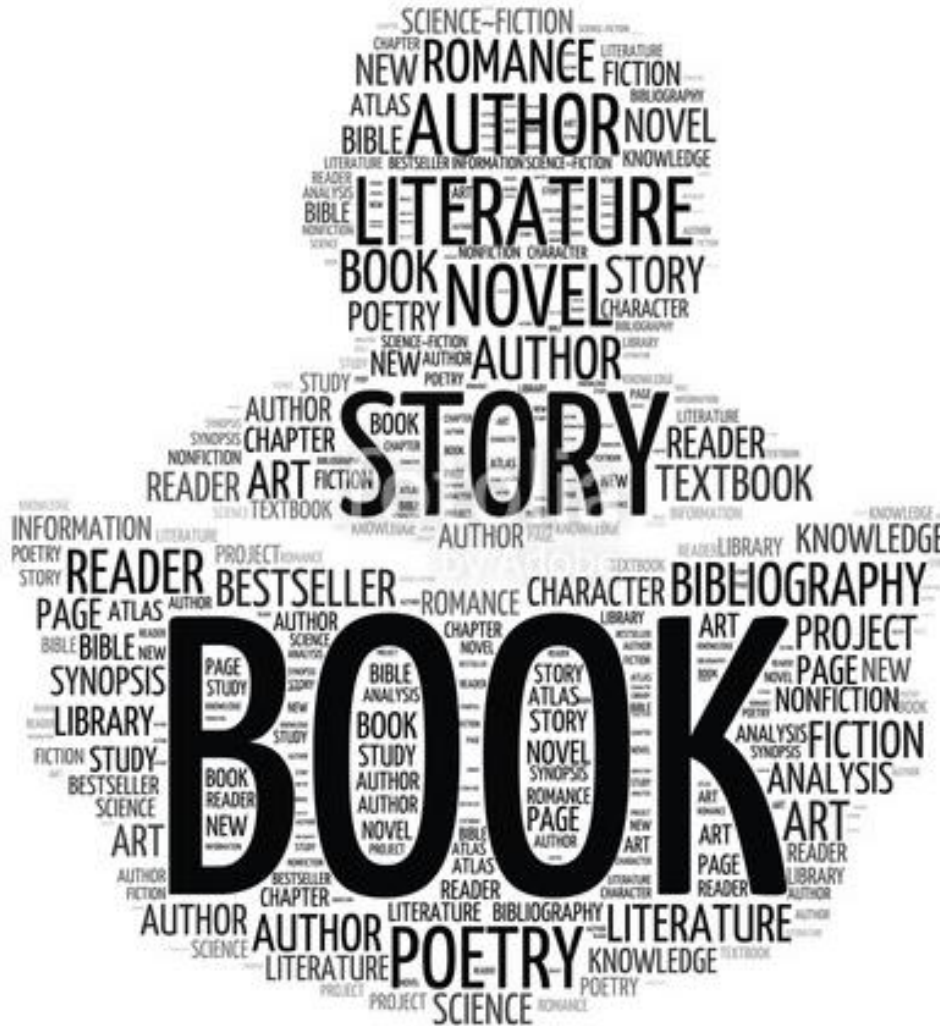
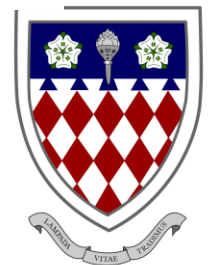


Spalding High School English Department Year 12 English Literature Study Guide



Name:

Form:



Welcome to the study of A Level English Literature! The purpose of this document is to encourage you to read widely within the subject. In order to achieve high grades in your exams, you cannot restrict your work to what we cover in class.

Reciprocity...Reflectiveness...Resilience...Resourcefulness

How to approach your studies in Literature and to use this guide:

1. Don't limit yourself to the texts we recommend; our librarians, Kirsty and Claudia, are really fantastic at helping you to source texts of interest which may stretch your reading habits. (**RESOURCEFULNESS-research, investigate, explore**)
2. Ensure that you make a note of everything that you read with a few comments relating to what you liked / didn't like about the text as well as notes from any activities. We would recommend that you have EITHER a reading journal section in your main folder, or an exercise book to keep all of the information in the right place. (**REFLECTIVENESS-organise, plan, prepare**)
3. We will have lessons periodically which will enable you to share experiences of reading with your peers and your teacher will browse through this too. This is compulsory, so keep your records up to date! (**RECIPROCITY-communicate, co-operate, share. RESILIENCE-keep going, practice to improve, identify key points in texts**)
4. Reading around the topics we cover in class will help you to meet the assessment objectives outlined by the exam board (AQA English Literature: Specification B). WRITING WITH THESE IN MIND IS ESSENTIAL TO YOUR SUCCESS - LEARN WHAT THEY MEAN AND WRITE ACCORDINGLY:

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES:

- **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.

KEY MATERIALS REQUIRED FOR STUDY:

1. Purchase your own copies of the set texts – you'll want to annotate them which you cannot do with a school copy. You can pick up second hand copies in good condition fairly cheaply on Amazon or eBay. If you are serious about English, look on them as an investment.
Throughout the course you will study:
 - Literary Genres - Tragedy: *King Lear* William Shakespeare; *Death of a Salesman* Arthur Miller; Selection of poems by John Keats (anthology provided by school)
 - Texts and Genres - Elements of Crime Writing: *Atonement* Ian McEwan; *Brighton Rock* Graham Greene; Selection of crime genre poems (anthology provided by school)
2. A well organised folder with dividers. We do check on your folders as they reflect your study skills!
3. An A4 notebook that you will keep throughout the two years of study which will act as a record of your wider reading. These will be shared and observed periodically and will be essential to developing further and independent reading coursework later in the course.
4. We would recommend study guides to help you if funds allow. The *York Notes Advanced* series are very good.

EXPECTATIONS

The English Department has very high expectations of all of their pupils. Research around the topics covered in lessons and reading the set texts more than once are **non-negotiable expectations**.

The expectations we have of all students are reinforced by the effort descriptors in school:

- O- **Outstanding**. This is a student who always goes the extra mile (reads around the subject, drafts and re-drafts work etc), hands in work on time which is abundant with effort; contributes widely in lessons and strives for excellence in all areas.
- AE- **Above Expected**. This is a student who is very good, one who is diligent and conscientious. They always endeavour to produce high quality work.
- E- **Expected**. This is a student who meets all deadlines and behaves in the cooperative way that is expected within our school community.
- BE- **Below Expected**. This is a student who is often late, arrives to lessons unprepared and generally shows apathy towards their learning. They will be reported to the Head of Year and will be placed on the late work policy or monitored.
- I- **Inadequate**. This is a lazy student who makes no effort and will not last very long within 6th Form!

In addition to the above here are some 'English Essentials':

- English is advantaged immeasurably by discussion. **If you do not like discussion, this is possibly not the subject for you.**
- English is one of the toughest A Levels and is not an 'easy fourth option'. Scholarship is rigorous and you will be expected to work hard. If you really disliked Shakespeare/poetry/AO2 at GCSE, then think twice!
- If you do not like reading, then DO NOT study this subject! We will monitor your library borrowing records and journals to scrutinise your engagement with the subject if required.
- If you struggle to write with clarity, again, think twice! This is an essay based subject and this is ultimately what your grade will be based on.
- Do NOT copy and paste - your teacher will know, you fail to progress and this is also called plagiarism, or cheating.
- **The department also runs extra-curricular enhancement and revision lectures and seminars; your attendance at these is monitored and if you do not do your utmost to attend, you will be challenged.**

SUMMER HOLIDAY TASKS:

- When you return after the summer, you will be studying both genres outlined above so get ready to hit the ground running by reading *King Lear* and *Atonement*. Make some initial notes about the writers' crafts and their effects.
- Read the information about the Literary Canon and Literary Criticism included in this booklet.
- Be certain that you understand the meaning of structure, tone and form.
- Try to define what the tragedy and crime genres are. Is there a formula for each? Make a note of your ideas for discussion in your first lessons.

Extension activity: Try to track down and watch a performed version of one of the texts. How faithful is the adaptation? Justify your answer.

WIDER READING - THE LITERARY CANON

The Literary Canon - what is it? 'The term "literary canon" refers to a classification of literature. It is a term used widely to refer to a group of literary works that are considered the most important of a particular time period or place. For example, there can be a literary canon comprised of works from a particular country, or works written within a specific set of years, or even a collection of works that were all written during a certain time period and within a certain region. In this way, a literary canon establishes a collection of similar or related literary works' Here is a simplified overview of chronological 'movements' within the canon:

- **Medieval:** (up to 1500) Contrary to popular belief, the medieval period cannot be characterised as entirely barbaric. During this period, national literatures in the nation's traditional styles appeared. Due to their disparate influences, literature and culture in medieval Europe were very diverse, drawing from different, often conflicting sources. Suggested texts - *The Canterbury Tales* (Chaucer), *Beowulf*, *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*. Don't feel that you have to persevere with the original texts; Simon Armitage has produced an excellent version of *Sir Gawain*. Also, if you prefer drama, the morality play *Everyman* would be a good starting point.
- **Renaissance/Early Modern:** (1500-1650) During the Renaissance, notions of Europe's and of humankind's centrality in the world were challenged and partially discredited by advances in scientific theory, a rediscovery of Greco-Roman culture, and the so-called discovery of the Americas. Suggested writers/texts: *Volpone* (Ben Jonson), *Dr. Faustus* (Christopher Marlowe), *The Changeling* (Middleton and Rowley) and of course anything by Shakespeare! This can include his sonnets too. An extract from Milton's *Paradise Lost* could be advantageous to read for Judeo-Christian ideas.
- **Enlightenment in Europe:** (1650-1800) In the midst of the massive - and often cataclysmic - social changes that violently reshaped Europe during the eighteenth century, philosophers and other thinkers championed reason and the power of the human mind, contributing to the somewhat misleading appellation of this pre-revolutionary period as an "Age of Enlightenment." Things began to radically change in literature after the French Revolution in 1789. Suggested writers/texts: William Congreve, Daniel Defoe, Samuel Johnson, Horace Walpole and *The Songs of Innocence and Experience* by William Blake. Horace Walpole is a really good writer to look at as you can see his work giving way to Romanticism and the Gothic elements contained within it.
- **Romanticism:** (1800-1900) This time period also includes Victorian literature to keep it simple! Emerging in the late eighteenth century and extending until the late nineteenth century, Romanticism broke with earlier models of thinking that were guided by rationalism and empiricism. After the American and French revolutions, faith in social institutions declined considerably; no longer were systems that were organized around hierarchy and the separation of classes considered superior. Suggested texts/writers: Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, the poetry of Keats, Byron and Shelley, and *Jekyll and Hyde* by Robert Louis Stevenson. Look at William Wordsworth as an early Romantic, Jane Austen, William Godwin's Caleb Williams, have a look too at Political Philosophers such as Jean- Jacques Rousseau and John Locke. For key Victorian texts, think of the poetry of Robert and Elizabeth Browning, *Alice in Wonderland*, *The Water Babies*, Alfred Lord Tennyson's poetry and Darwin's *On the Origin of Species*.
- **Modernism:** (1900s) This is often credited as the time period which instigated 'The Revolution of the Word'. Literary and linguistic systems were seen as games in which "pieces" (words) and "rules" (grammar, syntax, and other conventions) were combined with playfulness and sometimes with pathos to emphasize the instabilities of language as a reflection of an instable world- think of the major upheavals of the early 20th

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Century. Suggested writers/texts: Gertrude Stein, Virginia Woolf, Jerome K Jerome, Katherine Mansfield. Charles Baudelaire is great to explore the urban space of the city, James Joyce, TS Eliot's *The Wasteland*.

- **Post – Modernism:** (post WWII - Modern day) Postmodern literature is literature characterised by heavy reliance on techniques like fragmentation, paradox, and questionable narrators, and is often (though not exclusively) defined as a style or trend which emerged in the post–World War II era. Postmodern works are seen as a reaction against Enlightenment thinking and Modernist approaches to literature. Suggested writers/texts: Brett Easton-Ellis - *American Psycho*, JG Ballard - *Crash*, Vladimir Nabokov - *Lolita*, William Burroughs - *Naked Lunch*, Margaret Atwood, Kazuo Ishiguro, Salman Rushdie.

FURTHER READING – LITERARY CRITICISM

What is it? Lit Crit explores texts from a variety of perspectives. It is like wearing different glasses and viewing a play through different eyes. Those of you who study sociology will be familiar with these ideas e.g. functionalism, Marxism etc. Below are a few approaches which you may find interesting to apply to books you have read:

Feminist and Gender Criticism:

This approach "examines how sexual identity influences the creation and reception of literary works". Originally an offshoot of feminist movements, gender criticism today includes a number of approaches, including the so-called "masculinist" approach. Feminism's central idea is that the patriarchal attitudes that have dominated western thought have resulted, consciously or unconsciously, in literature "full of unexamined 'male-produced' assumptions." Feminist criticism attempts to correct this imbalance by analysing and challenging such attitudes - by questioning, for example, why none of the characters in Othello ever challenge the right of a husband to murder a wife accused of adultery. Other goals of feminist critics include exploring how literature reflects or rejects the social forces that have historically kept the sexes from achieving "total equality."

Psychological Criticism:

This approach reflects the effect that modern psychology has had upon both literature and literary criticism. Fundamental figures in psychological criticism include Sigmund Freud (Freudian approach - psychoanalytic theories: wish-fulfilment, sexuality, the unconscious, repression, language, dreams and symbols) and Carl Jung (Jungian approach - whose theories about the unconscious are also valuable to literature).

Marxist Criticism:

This focuses on the economic and political elements of literature. Marxist criticism often argues that all literature is political. It is frequently criticised as judgmental, but Marxist criticism "can illuminate political and economic dimensions of literature other approaches overlook." There is a sense that text is separable from the literary times which produced it.

Take any book that you have enjoyed reading and see if what interpretation(s) you can take from looking at it through the lens of any of the above critical approaches!

THE PRESENTATION OF WRITTEN WORK

1. PEEL:

In English, expression is essential and in critical writing you will be expected to use PEEL as the basic skeleton form of expression. Below is an example paragraph in response to the question what does Percy Shelley say about the nature of power in 'Ozymandias'?

Within 'Ozymandias', Shelley employs a variety of techniques to demonstrate that power is only temporary, and ultimately, it has the power to corrupt. (*This is my POINT as it immediately engages with the question*). This can be demonstrated by the desolate lexical field which includes the words 'decay [...], boundless [...], and bare'. (*This is my EVIDENCE. It is selected in the form of direct quotes to support my point*). By using the alliterative adjectives 'boundless' and 'bare', Shelley suggests that little of the once great ruler's empire remains; it is a world that is now empty, failing and desolate. There is very little to imply that time preserves power; it will decay along with our corporeal frames. The plosive quality of the 'b' sound also enables the tone to be perceived as harsh, linking to the equally harsh reality that power is only temporary and does not have the ability to stop time and death. (*This is my EXPLANATION and also a LINK. It unpicks the evidence and tries to explore the methods used by the writer and the effects these create. There is also a summative comment which LINKS back to the question*).

Here is a second example for your reference:

At the beginning of the play, Othello is presented as a true hero, celebrated by characters who hold high status such as the Duke of Venice who greet him reverentially as "Valiant Othello". However, the lower status characters of Roderigo and Iago negate this and refer to Othello with negativity in an attempt to shape audience opinion of him before his character appears on stage. Racial slurs, such as "thick lips [...], Black ram" invite the audience to view the character with scrutiny and fit with ideas of racism which may arguably have been inherent in Renaissance audiences.

2. INTRODUCTIONS:

The examiner will always look for an introduction that is sharp, precise and concise and which engages with the question, revealing your understanding. Look at this example in response to the question: 'He died a hero'. Is this how you view Othello by the end of Shakespeare's play?

A hero can be defined as 'a man distinguished by exceptional courage, nobility and strength' (Greenblatt, 2013, p.235). Aristotle reinforced this idea, yet also recognised that imperfection was a key characteristic of the tragic hero. These seemingly conflicting ideas are reflected in 'Othello' by the protagonist of the same name in the sense that Othello exists in a state of perpetual uncertainty, wavering between his love for his wife and his misplaced loyalty to the Machiavel Iago, whose poisonous dealings find Othello torn between the antithetical emotions of love and hate, trust and jealousy. This changing dichotomy is reflected throughout the play, where audience perceptions of Othello as a hero rise and fall adding to the tragic qualities of the play.

What is strong about this introduction?

- Definition
- Engages with the question
- It mentions a key critic and is referenced correctly
- It deals with the question
- It confidently mentions the plot/ideas around it
- It has the potential to add literary terminology

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- It has an apt academic style and register without being too dense
- It is concise

3. REFERENCING:

Referencing stops you being accused of unintentional plagiarism. When you find a quote that you wish to use in an essay, you must reference and not pass off another's ideas as your own. There are two main ways to reference:

1: **Harvard.** This is within text referencing: A hero can be defined as 'a man distinguished by exceptional courage, nobility and strength' (Greenblatt, 2013, p.235). You must give the writer's surname, the year the book was published and the page it came from.

2: **Footnotes.** The footnote system of referencing uses a numeric reference to the citation in the body of the text, with the citation details at the bottom of the page. For example:

Fashion writer Colin McDowell notes that it is partly thanks to Duke Philippe III that 'exaggeration entered male fashion – exaggeration of shape, in particular'¹

Citation details at bottom of page

Numeric reference in body of text

¹ Colin McDowell, *The Man of Fashion: The Peacock Male and Perfect Gentleman*, Thames & Hudson Ltd, London, 1997, p. 36.

How to insert footnotes using Word:

1. Place cursor where the footnote is to be inserted
2. From the menu bar, select References, then Insert Footnote.
3. The (next) numeric footnote will automatically be inserted and also placed at the bottom of the page

Your teacher will advise you of their preference, but either is acceptable.

Bibliography:

At the end of any piece of coursework, you MUST attach a bibliography. Quite simply, this is a list in alphabetical order of all of the works you have consulted or referenced whilst preparing and writing your assignment. It does not form part of the word count. All of the information you need is contained on the opening pages of every text. It must be set out as follows:

Surname, Initial. (Date of publication). Text title underlined. Place of publication: Publisher

Example:

Crystal D (2010) The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Language, 3rd edition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Webography:

This is simply a list of websites that you use. List them with date accessed, in date order. It is easy to keep track as you go - you then won't have a horrid job at the end.

The library has multiple study skills guides; please use them!