

# *A Level English Literature*



# *Transition Booklet*

# *A Level English Literature at The Polesworth School*

Welcome to English Literature- you've chosen an excellent A Level!

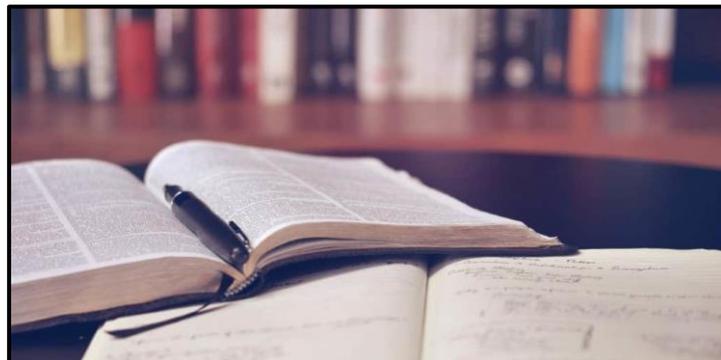
Many students find the 'jump' from GCSE to A Level difficult to manage, which is understandable for many reasons. Firstly, their name literally means 'advanced qualifications', which indicates they will require much more of you as a student than GCSE work did. A Level Literature requires you to gain a deeper understanding of the texts you study; to think not only about the texts themselves, but the writers behind them and all of the complexities surrounding their lives which shaped the texts they wrote. Lessons will involve a lot of reflection and discussion on texts, and as students, you will be expected to come to lessons armed with your knowledge of the texts and your own personal views on them.

If you think back to your GCSE English lessons, they were most likely structured very carefully by your teachers, and work both in class and at home would have specific requirements. At A Level, there is a far greater expectation for students to take the initiative and go above and beyond in their independent studies, to really develop your understanding of the set texts. You will also be expected to organise your own time effectively to meet deadlines and complete revision on your own.

This transition booklet has been designed to get you thinking like an A Level Literature student: the activities will develop your critical thinking skills and will help you to build a solid foundation of knowledge which will stand you in good stead throughout this two-year course. You will also be exposed to a wide range of literature texts in these tasks, many of which are some of the most famous works in the literary canon.

We hope you enjoy completing these activities, and that they give you a real insight into the life of an A Level English Literature student here at Polesworth.

If you have any questions or queries, please contact Miss B Currall, KS5 Co-ordinator of English and Media Studies (email: [b.currall@thepolesworthschool.com](mailto:b.currall@thepolesworthschool.com)), or Miss A Hodgkinson, Head of English and Media Studies (email: [a.hodgkinson@thepolesworthschool.com](mailto:a.hodgkinson@thepolesworthschool.com))



# Key Information

Exam board: OCR (H472)

## Set texts

The following texts listed below are the set texts you will study across the A Level Literature course. You **do not** need to purchase these texts before the course commences, as the English Department will provide each student with copies, but you may wish to complete some preliminary reading around these texts or purchase revision guides.

- *Hamlet*, by William Shakespeare
- The poetry of Christina Rossetti (OCR A Level anthology)
- *The Duchess of Malfi*, by John Webster
- *Jane Eyre*, by Charlotte Brontë
- *Sense and Sensibility*, by Jane Austen
- The poetry of Wilfred Owen (teacher's choice)\*
- *A Long Long Way*, by Sebastian Barry\*
- *Journey's End*, by R.C Sherriff\*

\*Coursework texts

## KS5 Curriculum Map

### YEAR 12

Term 1:  
*Hamlet*  
Rossetti poetry

Term 2:  
*Hamlet*  
*The Duchess of Malfi*

Term 3:  
Begin coursework  
*Jane Eyre*

### YEAR 13

Term 1:  
Coursework/Unseen analysis  
*Jane Eyre*

Term 2:  
Coursework completion  
*Sense and Sensibility*

Term 3:  
Revision and exams



# Transition Activities

Please complete the compulsory task and then select at least **three** of the activities from the grid below to complete during your extended summer- you can, however, complete as many as you like. We will expect you to bring your four activities along with you to your first A Level English lesson in September.

## Compulsory task:

Create a booklet of research (either on Christina Rossetti and the social, cultural, political and historical contexts of the Victorian era. Make sections with notes on the following:

- Christina Rossetti's life- research her childhood, family, adult life, personal relationships and career
- Key historical events in the Victorian era
- Gender issues/roles
- Social class
- Education
- Religion
- Victorian political and artistic movements (including the Suffragette movement and the Pre Raphaelite Brotherhood)
- Key literary works/writers
- Issues for female writers in the Victorian era

## Other transition activities (select at least three):

Research revenge tragedies, finding out about their history and generic conventions	Watch the MASSOLIT video lectures on 'Victorian poetry' and make notes on them URL: <a href="http://www.massolit.io">www.massolit.io</a> Username: <a href="mailto:jcs009@jcsolineresources.org">jcs009@jcsolineresources.org</a> Password: JCSFoundation	Read and analyse the poem <i>An Apple Gathering</i> by Christina Rossetti, considering how you can link to the context of Rossetti's life and/or the Victorian era
Read a text from the wider reading list (on next page) and create a summary of your reading	Create a timeline of key historical events for women since the 17 <sup>th</sup> century	Read or listen to the audio book of the short story <i>The Yellow Wallpaper</i> by Kate Chopin (available for free on Audible) and make notes on what this reveals about life for 20 <sup>th</sup> century women
Research the waves of feminism and make notes on each of them	Find out what Marxist, feminist and Freudian theories are and make notes /flashcards/posters on each of them	Write a summary of no more than 200 words, explaining what your favourite book is and why.



## Recommended Reading List

Margaret Atwood, *The Handmaid's Tale*,  
*The Testaments*

Jane Austen, *Emma/Persuasion/Pride and  
Prejudice*

Pat Barker, *Regeneration/The Ghost Road*

Julian Barnes, *A History of the World in 10  
½ Chapters*

Louis de Bernieres, *Captain Corelli's  
Mandolin*

Emily Bronte, *Wuthering Heights*

Angela Carter, *The Bloody Chamber*

Charles Dickens/*Great Expectations*

Daphne Du Maurier, *Rebecca*

George Eliot, *The Mill on the  
Floss/Middlemarch*

Sebastian Faulks, *Birdsong*

F.Scott Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby*

E.M Forster, *A Room with a View*

Elizabeth Gaskell, *North and South/Wives  
and Daughters*

Thomas Hardy, *Far from the Madding  
Crowd, Tess of the D'Urbervilles*

Khaled Hosseini, *A Thousand Splendid  
Suns/The Kite Runner*

Kazuo Ishiguro, *Never Let Me Go*

James Joyce, *Dubliners/Ulysses*

Harper Lee, *To Kill a Mockingbird*

Ian McEwan, *Atonement/Enduring Love*

Vladimir Nobokov, *Lolita*

David Nicholls, *One Day*

Sylvia Plath, *The Bell Jar*

Sylvia Rhys, *Wide Sargasso Sea*

J.D Salinger, *The Catcher in the Rye*

Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*

Zadie Smith, *White Teeth*

Bram Stoker, *Dracula*

Leo Tolstoy, *Anna Karenina/War and  
Peace*

Alice Walker, *The Colour Purple*

H.G Wells, *The War of the Worlds*

Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Grey*

Jeanette Winterson, *Oranges are not the  
only Fruit*

Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the  
Rights of Women*

Virginia Woolf, *Mrs Dalloway*

